

ANNALS
OF
GREAT BRITAIN,

FROM
THE ASCENSION OF GEORGE III, TO THE PEACE OF
AMSTERDAM.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

Volume II.

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CONTENTS

OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

CHAP. XV.

American campaign in the spring of 1779... Capture of British West-India islands... Ineffectual attempt of the allied armies on Savannah... Successes of the British on the coast of Jersey... Efforts of the French on the isle of Jersey... Dangerous junction of the French and Spanish fleets... Alarm of the country... Embarking the volunteers of the island, for the defence of the country in redress of grievances... Riots of the lower part in Scotland... Meeting and debates of parliament... Mr. Burke's constitutional reform bill... Ascendancy of the opposition in the house of commons... Resolution on the power of the crown... Revoked by a subsequent vote... Riots in the Metropolis... Lord George Gordon committed to the Tower... Meeting of parliament... Adjournment, prorogation, and dissolution... Supplies and ways and means..... 1

CHAP. XVI.

Siege of Charlestown by the British... Defence and capitulation of the fort... Capture of Fort Mifflin by the Spaniards... Pursuit of the continental army through South Carolina by the detachment of Charleston... Cornwallis prepares for penetrating to the northern provinces of Carolina... Premature attempts of the loyalists in that quarter... Movement of American force, from the south to support them

.... Situation of Cornwallis's army.... General Gates advances to meet the British commander.... Battle of Camden.... Preparations of Cornwallis for a southern campaign after his victory.... Defeat of Major Ferguson.... Retrograde movements of the British troops.... View of hostilities in the north.... Arrival of Rochambeau's auxiliary forces.... Apostasy of Arnold from the American cause.... His conference with Major André.... Unfortunate arrestation and execution of that officer.... Partial action of Admiral Rodney with the Spaniards.... Rupture with the Dutch.... Armed neutrality.... Disclosure of the Dutch and American treaty.... Important capture by the Spaniards.... Movements of the hostile fleets in the West Indies.... Partial encounters.... Junction of the French and Spanish fleets.... Tremendous hurricane in the West Indies..... 32

CHAPTER XVII.

Meetings and proceedings of the new parliament.... Debates on the choice of a speaker.... on the address.... on the war with Holland.... on the conduct of Lord Sandwich.... on the proposed plan of reform.... on Indian affairs.... on the terms of the loan.... on the neglected state of the police, and military interference in the late riots.... on Mr. Fox's motion for peace with America.... Outline of the war in India.... Attempt of the French on the island of Jersey.... Blockade and sally of the garrison at Gibraltar.... Junction of the Grand fleets of France and Spain in the British Channel.... Expedition of Kempenfeldt.... Action off the Dogger-lank.... Naval expedition of Commodore Johnson.... Capture of St. Eustatia, and other Dutch settlements.... Indecision of hostilities between the French and English fleets in the West Indies.... Conduct of the French on St. Lucia.... Frigate captured by the English.... Marquis de Bouillé.... State of affairs in America.... Mutiny in the American army.... Ravages of Arnold in Virginia.... War in Carolina.... Battle of Guildford.... Retreat of Cornwallis to Wilmington, and afterwards into Virginia.... Action of

CONTENTS.

v

Lord Rawdon with the provincials at Hobbs's-hill. . . . Progress of General Greene. . . . Retreat of Lord Rawdon to Charlestown. . . . Battle of Eutaw Springs. . . . Views of Washington and the count de Rochambeau on New-York. . . . Stratagem of the allies to delude Clinton. . . . Washington's march into Virginia. . . . Junction with La Fayette. . . . Retreat of Cornwallis within the works of Yorktown. . . . Siege of Yorktown, and surrender of the British army. . . . Capture of St. Christopher, and other settlements, by the French. 62

CHAP. XVIII.

Meeting of parliament in November 1781. . . . Debates on the address, and on the subject of the war. . . . Division of opinion among the whigs, on the subject of American independence. . . . Impeachment of Lord Sandwich. . . . Resignation of the secretary of state for America. . . . Lord George Germaine. . . . Rising numbers of the opposition. . . . Ministers outvoted on the 27th of February. . . . Subsequent motions carried by the opposition. . . . Recovery of a ministerial majority on two occasions. . . . Lord North at last announces the termination of his own administration. . . . New administration formed. . . . Discussion of Irish affairs. . . . Mr. Burke's economical bill is carried. . . . Mr. Pitt's motion for reform. . . . Rodney's naval campaign in the West Indies. . . . Capture of Dutch forts on the coast of Africa. . . . Capture of Minorca by the duke de Crillon. . . . Hostilities by sea and land in the East Indies. . . . Siege of Gibraltar. 104

CHAP. XIX.

Death of the marquis of Rockingham. . . . Division among the surviving ministers of the cabinet. . . . Resignation of the duke of Portland and Mr. Fox, and appointment of Lord Shelburne to the head of the ministry. . . . Every sort of a separate peace rejected by the Americans. . . . Osteny's mediation of Russia and the emperor of Germany. . . . Negotiations for peace. . . . Meeting of parliament on the 5th of December 1782. . . . Debates on the terms of peace. 115

CHAP. XX.

<i>Event of the election</i> . . .	<i>Ascendancy of the new ministry</i> . . .
<i>First session of the new parliament</i> . . .	<i>Commutation act</i> . . .
<i>East-India bills</i> . . .	<i>Second session</i> . . .
<i>Debates on the West-</i>	<i>minister election</i> . . .
<i>on the notice of Arcot's debts</i> . . .	<i>Rejection of Mr. Pitt's bill of reform</i> . . .
<i>Budget of the year</i> . . .	<i>Commercial treaty with Ireland</i>
	180

CHAP. XXI.

<i>Third session of parliament</i> . . .	<i>duke of Richmond's fortification bill rejected</i> . . .
<i>Alteration of the mutiny bill</i> . . .	<i>Mr Pitt's bill for the institution of the sinking fund</i> . . .
<i>Amendment by Mr. Fox</i> . . .	<i>Impeachment of Warren Hastings</i> . . .
<i>Mr. Dundas's bill for giving the powers of the governor-general of India</i> . . .	<i>Supplies of the year</i> . . .
<i>Prorogation of parliament</i> . . .	<i>Attempt by Margaret Nicholson on the king's life</i>
	206

CHAP. XXII.

<i>Meeting of the fourth session of parliament</i> . . .	<i>Measures recommended to the attention of parliament</i> . . .
<i>Consideration of the commercial treaty with France</i> . . .	<i>Question concerning the Scotch peerages</i> . . .
<i>Consolidation of the taxes</i> . . .	<i>Farming of the revenue on licences for post-horses</i> . . .
<i>Motion for renewing the test and corporation acts</i> . . .	<i>Prince of Wales's debts laid before parliament</i> . . .
<i>Petition of the debtors in Newgate</i> . . .	<i>Impeachment of Hastings</i> . . .
<i>Sitting concluded</i> . . .	<i>Interference of Britain in the disturbances of Holland</i> . . .
<i>Parliamentary proceedings from the opening of the year 1788</i> . . .	<i>Declaratory act respecting the transporting of troops to India</i> . . .
<i>Discussion of the slave trade</i> . . .	<i>Resumption of Hastings's trial</i> . . .
<i>Budget for the year 1788</i> . . .	<i>Wars in the east of Europe</i> . . .
<i>Illness of his majesty</i> . . .	<i>Debates on the regency bill</i>
	226

vii

*Rise of the French revolution. . . Assembly of the notables. . .
Disputes between the king and the parliament of Paris. . .
Assembly of the states general. . . Assumption of power by
the tiers-etat. . . The king compelled to advise the union of
orders. . . New jealousies between the court and the popular
party. . . Assembling of troops near the capital. . . Insur-
rection of the Parisians. . . Capture of the Bastile. . . Pro-
ceedings of the English parliament. . . Dispute with Spain
respecting the settlement of Nootka sound. . . Armament for
war. . . Adjustment of the dispute. . . View of affairs in
France after the capture of the Bastile. . . State of the rest
of Europe in 1790. 292*

*Russian armament. . . . Debates on the bill for the constitution
of Canada. . . . Incident of mention of the French revolution.
. . . . Bill for the relief of the protestant dissenters. . . .
Application of the Scottish church to the abolition of the
test act, as it regarded Scotland. . . . Discussion of the slave-
trade. . . . Finances of 1791. . . . Ferment in the public opi-
nion during this year. . . . Riots at Birmingham. . . . Meet-
ing of parliament in January 1792. . . . Bill passed respect-
ing libels. . . . Reforming societies. . . . Police bill for the me-
tropolis. . . . Finances for 1792. . . . Embassy to China. . . .
East-Indian war.*

Situation of affairs in France.... Parties in the national assembly.... Declaration of war with the king of Hungary and Bohemia.... Subjection of the king to republican ministers.... Insurrection of the 20th of June.... Appearance of La Fayette in Paris.... His vain efforts to rouse the Parisians in behalf of the king.... Another insurrection, prepared by the

jacobins. Events of the 10th of August. March of the Prussians into France. Progressive influence of the jacobins. Events from the 2d to the 6th of September in Paris. Dumourier appointed. The generalissimo of the French armies. Seizes on the passes of the Ardenne. Meets the duke of Brunswick. Miserable situation and retreat of the Prussians. Convention of Dumourier with Frederick William. 362

CHAP. XXVI.

Events and dispositions in England preparatory to the war. Debates of parliament. Dismissal of Chauvelin. Opening of the national convention in France. Aspect of the two parties. Expedition of the French, under Montesquieu, into Savoy. Annexation of his conquest to the departments of the republic. Human negotiation of Montesquieu with Geneva. Success of Cuvine. New and successful campaign of Dumourier. Conquest of Belgium. Execution of Louis XVI. 406

CHAP. XXVII.

Continued ascendancy of the jacobins after the trial of Louis. New efforts of the cabinet of Vienna for the recovery of the Netherlands. Landing of the duke of York in Holland, and death of Dumourier at Williamstadt. Defeat of General Mordaunt by the prince of Cobourg. Defection of Dumourier. Establishment of the revolutionary tribunal. Insurrection of the 2d of June, in which the Girondists are proscribed. Death of Marat, inflicted by Charlotte Corday. War of the convention with the confederated cities. and with the royalists of La Vendee. Campaign of the northern army of France against the allies. Sieges of Valenciennes and Dunkirk. Operations in the West Indies. 458

ANNALS

OF

GREAT BRITAIN,

FROM THE ASCENSION OF GEORGE III
TO THE PEACE OF AMIENS.

CHAPTER XV.

American campaign in the spring of 1779 . . . Capture of British West-India islands . . . Ineffectual attempt of the allied armies on Savannah . . . Successes of the British on the coast of Jersey . . . Efforts of the French on the isle of Jersey . . . Dangerous junction of the French and Spanish fleets . . . Alarm of the country . . . Embodiment of the volunteers of Ireland, for the defence of their country and redress of grievances . . . Riots of the lower orders in Scotland . . . Meeting and debates of parliament . . . Mr. Burke's economical reform bill . . . Ascendancy of the opposition in the house of commons . . . Revolution on the power of the crown . . . Revoked by a subsequent vote . . . Riots in the metropolis . . . Lord George Gordon committed to the Tower . . . Meeting of parliament . . . Adjournment, prorogation, and dissolution . . . Supplies, and ways and means.

DURING the preceding campaign in America, the provinces of Georgia and Carolina had seemed to promise some support to the standard of government, from the number of loyal settlers on
Vol. II.

CHAP.
XV.

1779.

A.

the more remote plantations. But it was soon found, that co-adjutors so distant and dispersed, could effect no important diversion. Seven hundred of the unfortunate royalists, assembled on the extremities of Carolina, were cut to pieces by the continental militia, and the rest who had taken up arms, submitted, through fear or compulsion, to the authority of congress. Early in the spring, the American general Lincoln, arrived in South Carolina to oppose our forces under Prevost. The British troops, under Colonel Campbell, had penetrated as far as Augusta; yet the dangerous vicinity of the enemy in South Carolina determined General Prevost to recal this party. Of Lincoln's army, a division to the number of 2000 were posted in a strong situation at Briar creek; under the command of General Ashe, with a view to intercept this retreat of Colonel Campbell. The sagacity of Prevost anticipated this design, and turned it to the enemy's disadvantage. By a sudden and stolen march, the Americans at Briar creek were surprized in a most unguarded state; their baggage, ammunition, and arms were seized by the victors, and between 3 and 400 killed or drowned in the pursuit. Thus the delusive hopes of the royalists were again rekindled. Until April, General Lincoln kept his post, but marched towards Augusta about the beginning of May, leaving 1500 men to guard the swamps and passes of the river. On his departure, Prevost conceived it practicable to effect an inroad into Georgia. The enemy's militia, astonished to see our troops advancing over morasses which had been deemed impracticable, made scarcely the shew of resistance, but retired on all hands towards Charlestown. After consultation with his officers, the British commander determined to continue the pursuit, and to attempt the siege of the capital of the province. When Lincoln perceived that this blow was intended, he

hastened to the relief of Charlestown. By the 11th of May, the British had crossed Ashley river, and took post near the city, which they summoned to surrender; but the strength of the enemy's works, the disadvantageous nature of the country, and the expected succour of Lincoln's superior army, convinced the British general of his designs on Charlestown being impracticable, and he judiciously determined to decamp from a situation which might have left him in disaster, without the hope of retreat. After the retreat of Prevost to the islands of St. James and St. John, in the southern vicinity of Charlestown, an effort was made by Lincoln to drive the British from their position on the narrow inlet which connects the latter island with the main land. Lincoln headed the assault in person, with a body of 5000; the strong posture of the British enabled a force of 800 men, under Colonel Maitland, to repel the assailants with great loss. The season soon after suspended hostilities in this quarter.

In the north, every motion of the war was desultory and indecisive. Washington, on his high and commanding posts above Verplanks and Stoney Point, kept cautiously from engaging, while Clinton could only ravage the exposed country, or make attempts upon detached fortresses and magazines. In this predatory warfare, the British general detached Sir George Collier, commander of the marines, along with Major-general Matthews, to effect a descent by way of the Chesapeake on the Virginian shores. Sir George, after passing the capes of Virginia, proceeded up the river Elizabeth. The enemy retired from Fort Nelson, which guards the passage to the towns of Norfolk and Portsmouth, and left an ample spoil of stores and provisions for the fleet and army of the invaders, who carried destruction wherever they ap-

May.

CHAP.
XV.

1779.

June.

proclaimed. The loss of the Americans was immense. Collier returned, after razing Fort Nelson to the ground.

Returning from this expedition, the same commander effected a similar service in concert with General Vaughan, on the eastern side of the North River, within three miles of Stoney point. The enemy retiring in every direction, scarce any shew of resistance was offered, except at the fort of La Fayette, where the garrison were some time of surrendering. The details of this campaign of desolation are numerous, but unimportant. Villages, fortified works, and even considerable towns, fell a prey to the victors, but the position of Washington remained unassailable, till Clinton, seemingly tired with such desultory proceedings, recalled his troops to head-quarters. At no period was the steady sagacity of the American general displayed in more striking similitude to the great Roman commander, whose name has been proverbially associated with the praise of his tactics. Like Fabius he beheld his native country laid waste, and like him waited immovable, as the mountains on which he stood, till the strength of his antagonist should expire by its own efforts, and the day of convenient retribution arrive. But, though too wise to hazard a general engagement, the Americans were not entirely unactive. Stoney point, in the vicinity of Washington's lines, had fallen into our hands. One of their best American commanders, Wayne, with a chosen body, retook this fortress, with circumstances of memorable gallantry, making prisoners of the garrison to the number of 500 men. The place was, indeed, speedily retaken, for Washington would not risk a battle by disputing it; and the Americans were driven back in a similar attempt which they made on Paulus-hook, opposite to the city of New-York. But

their victory of Stoney point remained a memorable encouragement to the provincials, how much their determined efforts could achieve; since the storming of that place had been accomplished by the bayonet, a weapon which had been usually regarded as chiefly fatal to themselves.

Once more, General Collier was called from New-York to relieve the small garrison of Penobscot, on the eastern confines of New-England, which was at this period besieged. The batteries had been opened by the Americans on this fortress, and a general assault was hourly expected. After a calm night, however, the enemy were found to have embarked, and their ships were making off with all speed. It was the sight of Collier's flight which hurried their departure. But their flight was unavailing. Of a numerous fleet which had come to the siege of an insignificant garrison, 24 transports were taken by the British, and several frigates were either captured; or destroyed by themselves, to prevent their capture.

Our fleet in the West Indies was commanded by Admiral Byron, after S^t. Lucia had surrendered to Admiral Barrington. The new commander left no means untried, to bring D'Estaing to a general engagement, but nothing could induce the Frenchman to hazard the conflict. He sometimes ventured out of Port-Royal, but constantly returned, on the appearance of our flag, and subsequent circumstances evinced the propriety of his conduct. When the season arrived for the West-India merchantmen to sail for England, it became no longer possible for Byron to keep his fleet entire in the West-India seas; a convoy for the trade was indispensable, and thus, in a manner more effective than a victory could have accomplished, were the whole of our defenceless islands laid open to D'Estaing's invasion. S^t. Vincents was instantly

CHAP.
XV.

1779.

attacked; and, though the captors were but a handful, yet the dread of the Caribbs, whom the cruelties of our planters had made enemies more formidable than the French, and who joined the French on their landing, obliged the governor to surrender without any resistance. Reinforced by another squadron from France, to the formidable strength of 26 ships of the line, and 10,000 land troops, D'Estaing next proceeded to attack Grenada and the Grenades; and after some resistance in the former island, reduced it to an unconditional surrender. Admiral Byron, however, weakened he found his fleet after the detachment which had gone as convoy to Europe, no sooner heard, on arriving off St. Lucia, of the capture of St. Vincents, than he sailed to meet D'Estaing, and, if possible, recover the lost island. During his voyage from St. Lucia, he heard of Grenada being attacked, and changed his plan of saving St. Vincents, for the sake of preserving Grenada. The two hostile fleets at last met; but, as the purpose on one side only, was to come to a pitched battle, nothing essential was effected. In the engagement, desultory as it was, some ships were disabled on both sides; the loss on our side amounted to more than 500 killed and wounded. Although the French fought in such a manner as to shun a decisive action, and though they retired first from the scene of battle, yet they claimed a victory for having baffled our attempts to save Grenada. The British commander having necessarily changed his views, on learning the fate of this island, and knowing that his own land forces bore no proportion to the troops of Count Dillon, who had taken it, gave up all idea of its recovery, and sailed after his own transports and disabled ships to St. Christophers. The French returned to Grenada at night, having lost, in the late action, even by their own estima-

Sept. 9.

tion, an immense number of sailors. D'Estaing then directing his operations to the northward, proposed two important objects; the first was the reduction of Georgia, the second an attack upon New-York along with Washington. Arriving on the coast of Carolina, he cast anchor at the mouth of the river Savannah, where he was joined by the army under General Lincoln, accompanied by the light-horse of Count Polaski.² As soon as the debarkation of the French troops was completed, the Count D'Estaing marched toward the city of Savannah, and summoned General Prevost, who had hurried from the upper country of Georgia to its relief, to surrender. General Prevost opportunely obtained twenty-four hours to consider of his answer; during which interval, he was joined by Colonel Maitland, whose troops pushed on through incredible fatigues across a most difficult country to relieve him. The safe arrival of such a succour, enabled him to decline the summons. The French and Americans amounting, as was well known, to 10,000 men, appeared to anticipate a certain triumph over a force not above one fourth of their number; but their attack on the British lines on the 9th of October, convinced them how much disparity of strength could be counterbalanced by skill and intrepidity. The allies were repulsed in this action, with the loss of 637 French troops, and 264 Americans. The issue of one battle determined that of the siege. The French and Americans kept possession of their lines only until the artillery and heavy baggage were withdrawn; and, as soon as this was accomplished, they re-embarked on board the fleet. The Americans retreated to South Carolina, and the Count D'Estaing's fleet divided. Part of them, under the admiral, return-

² Polaski, or Pulaski, a Polish officer in the American service, was one of the expatriated conspirators who attempted the life of Stanislaus.

CHAP.
XV.

1779.

ing to France, and the rest proceeding to the West Indies. During this memorable siege, the Americans lost one of their bravest associates, Count Polaski, who died by a mortal wound on the day of the assault; and the British lost Colonel Maitland, an officer no less regretted, who fell a martyr to a disorder contracted by the climate.

France had begun the hostilities of the present year by a successful expedition to the coast of Africa. As the British garrisons in that quarter were incapable of offering any serious resistance, the forts, settlements, factories, and property at Senegal, in the river Gambia, and other parts of that coast, fell without trouble into the hands of the enemy in the month of February 1779. The French, on hearing of that success, abandoned the fort Goree, which they had gained by the peace, and transported their artillery for the security of their acquisitions in Senegal. Sir Edward Hughes, on his passage to the East Indies, seized and garrisoned the above island. But, as the summer advanced, it seemed necessary to the French to attempt an impression on Britain, nearer home. The first attempt was on the island of Jersey, against which they appeared, in the month of May, with a force of 5 or 6000 men, conveyed in flat-bottomed boats, and attended by a considerable force of frigates. From such an armament, something important was expected; but the whole affair proved only an ineffective diversion, as the few militia of the island, along with the 78th regiment, obliged the invaders, after one encounter, to relinquish the island. It was fortunate, indeed, that the French had not more serious intentions of following this attempt by a greater and nearer invasion; for, although a plan had been concerted in the cabinet to prevent the union of the French and Spanish fleets, yet as it was impracticable to block up Brest, owing

to the lateness of our naval preparations, the sea was left open, and the French fleet was allowed to combine with the Spaniards at Cadiz. Sailing from thence, they numbered nearly 70 line of battle ships, with a cloud of attendant frigates and fire-ships, and presenting a terrible appearance as they entered the British channel, proceeded to the very harbour of Plymouth. It was a singular, and certainly also a fortunate event, that our channel fleet under Sir Charles Hardy, which was cruising at that very period near the chops of the Channel, did not encounter an enemy, at least by 22 ships of the line their superiors in number. A disorder which broke out on board of the united fleets, and the approach of the equinox, obliged them to abandon the British coasts, on which, it is wonderful to relate, that they never attempted a descent.

CHAP.

XV.

1778.

Aug. 15.

It may be well conceived, that the public mind, at the sight of a hostile flag flying triumphant around our shores, was agitated to no common degree. The executive power appeared, although late, to participate in the common apprehension of invasion, and took measures during the summer to put the country in some state of preparation. An answer was also issued to the hostile manifesto of Spain, refuting her allegations, and acquitting ourselves of her numerous charges. The one hundred complaints of his catholic majesty were not, indeed, easy to answer in detail; but, in reply to many wrongs that were alleged, such explanations of the cases were given, as retorted the blame on our accusers. There was little probability, indeed, that our minority should have been disposed to seek causes of quarrel with a power whose accession to the side of France was so much to be dreaded, and the alleged unwillingness of the court of London to abide by the arbitration of Spain, had a very

June 16.

CHAP.

XV.

1779.

ample excuse in the open partiality of that power to the interests of our enemies.

External appearances of danger were not the only alarming circumstances of this period. In Ireland, the contest of Britain with her colonies had not been hitherto beheld with indifference. The emancipation of their commerce, a right which the Irish had of late demanded with impatience, appeared to depend for its fulfilment on the overthrow of those very principles in politics for which the ministers of the mother country had gone to war with America; and hence, associating in their minds the cause of America with their own, no time seemed more auspicious to insist upon their liberties, than while other parts of the empire had risen in a similar opposition. The late grants of the house of commons had not appeared satisfactory. Associations against the purchase and use of British manufactures, already prevailed in some parts of the country, as a just retaliation upon the British merchants and manufacturers, for so illiberally entreating parliament to reject the Irish applications. But meetings of another and more important nature were embodied at the call of danger. Military operations were renewed over the whole Irish kingdom. Their numbers, ultimately, amounted, by the least computation; to 40,000 or 50,000. They declared themselves embodied for the double purpose, of defending their country against foreign enemies, and their rights against domestic usurpation. The chance of immediate invasion would have made it dangerous to have checked a spirit which had the defence of Ireland for its object in the first instance. Whatever was their secret sentiments, ministers thought proper to acquiesce in what could not be prevented, and supplied the greater part of the volunteers with arms.

In the train of the domestic occurrences, the discontents of the lower orders in Scotland, which prevailed during the summer of this year, deserve our notice, as connected with subsequent events of more serious importance. In such a quarter, where submissive principles were alike upheld by the influence of a strong aristocracy, and by the sober morals of the people, it was little expected that the fire of sedition should be kindled with fury. When a late law in favour of the English Roman catholics had passed, some Scottish representatives, with becoming wishes for toleration, proposed, and were framing a bill for extending the same advantages to the catholics of Scotland. The general assembly of the clergy in Scotland favoured this intention, though a small dissenting minority protested against this measure, as fraught with danger to the interests of protestantism. At the head of the tolerant party stood the venerable clergymen, Robertson, Blair, and some other names of the highest celebrity in literature and the Christian church. Their antagonists, who formed, as may be well imagined from their principles, the far inferior party of so enlightened a body as the Scottish clergy, were at the same time masters of much influence over the passions and prejudices of the lower orders.

The speeches and pamphlets of these orators, on the proposed bill respecting the catholics, and of laymen who felt inspired with similar hatred to popery, soon spread abroad such a ferment among the minds of the mob, that the capital, and some other towns of Scotland, exhibited dangerous disturbances. The persons of the catholics were insulted, and scarcely protected from destruction, and their houses and chapels were in several places burnt and demolished. The same popular fury affected the safety of those who were supporters of

CHAP.
XV.

1779.

toleration, or by insinuation, catholics at heart. Among the list of suspected papists, Dr. Robertson was proscribed by the insurgents; and the person and house of the historian of the reformation were only secured from destruction by the drawn swords of the military. Such were the first symptoms of that insane spirit, which at no great distance of time threatened convulsion over the whole island.

The speech from the throne, which opened the next session of parliament, on the 25th of October, still breathed the spirit of war, and called on the loyalty of the nation to assist his majesty in pursuing hostilities with America. The state of Ireland was recommended to the attention of the legislature; but on the subject of the last American and West-Indian campaign there was a total and strange silence. The attacks of the opposition, which attended the debate on the address, were commenced with the liveliest confidence, and seemed to denounce, rather than to investigate, the conduct of ministers. All the misfortunes of the past year were heaped up as matter of accusation. Our losses in the West-Indies, our fruitless contest with America, the junction of our enemies fleets, and the invasion of Jersey, which the laxity of our naval preparations had permitted, were all imputed to the errors of the ruling and responsible powers. If Plymouth had not been razed to the ground, and our coasts made the scene of desolation, it was not because we were armed to oppose the enemy, but because the enemy had not availed themselves of their advantages; for the boasted empire of Britain over the ocean was so strangely altered, that our very hereditary dominion, the Channel, and the mouths of our very harbours, had been in possession of France and Spain. All the expence, and all the mighty resources of a na-

tion possessing armaments, which, under a proper administration, would have carried terror to the ends of the earth, came but to this, that our fleets could neither secure our own coasts from insult, nor ensure our trading ships from delays in harbour, and capture when they put to sea, nor transport our troops in sufficient time to give effective aid, and to feed our wars in the colonies. The perturbed state of Ireland was ascribed, by the same speakers, to the system of measures hitherto pursued in that kingdom, to the influence of a corrupt majority, maintained in their houses of parliament, and to the long delay of concessions; which, if they ever came, would appear to come with the bad grace of a most illiberal reluctance.

CHAP.
XV.
1779.

The house of lords was the first scene of particular discussions on the subject of Irish affairs. A motion of censure being moved by the earl of Shelburne, on the proceedings of his majesty's ministers, with respect to that country, a series of direct and specific charges were alleged against them. They were charged with having broken the royal faith and compact, by robbing the Irish of that immense military force, which the country supported at an expence exceeding her ability; of having resisted a claim for a free trade, coming from every quarter and every party, and every description of men, in that kingdom; and of having allowed, by the naked state in which it was left at a period of expected invasion, the whole country to rise in arms, and now demand, at the point of the sword, what ought to have been willingly and peaceably granted.

As the affairs of Ireland carried such threats in their aspect, it was at length declared in the house of commons, that the period of her relief was at hand. Three propositions were laid down by the

CHAP.
XV.

1779

minister, and the house agreed to them without hesitation.—1, To repeal those laws which prohibited the exportation of Irish manufactures, made of or mixed with wool from Ireland, to any part of Europe. 2, To allow the exportation and importation of foreign glass from and into Ireland. And, 3, that Ireland should be suffered to carry on a trade to and from the British colonies in America and the West Indies. Two bills were accordingly founded on the two first propositions, which were immediately passed, and received the royal assent. The third, being more complex in its nature, was suffered to lie over during the holidays, in its present state of an open proposition.

The unaccounted expenditure of public money, during this war, had been a subject of frequent animadversion. While new expences were rising, in endless prospect, and the costs, without the profits of the contests, were becoming every day more apparent, the duke of Richmond moved to address the throne for a reduction of the civil list, as some alleviation of the national burdens. Lord Shelburne, displaying the enormous increase of the army extraordinaries, resumed the same subject in the lords, and concluded his strictures by declaring his belief that enormous sums, for which ministers were unable to account, went to the support of iniquitous influence and corruption. The lords of administration made but short replies to these motions, trusting to the numbers of their mute supporters, whose victory lay in their votes. For attempting this inquiry, however, the duke of Richmond and Lord Shelburne received the thanks of the city of London.

The subject of economical reform was renewed with advantage in the house of commons, by the eloquent powers of Burke. To prepare the way

for his intended bill³ on that subject, he drew the outline, and explained the objects, of his general plan. Those objects went to a removal of all public offices that could be fairly pronounced useless, but of which the removal would not disturb even the present arrangements of ministers, still less embarrass any future administration. Nothing, he promised, should be invaded; which was held by a private individual, under legal tenure. No substantial office should be stripped of its accustomed functions. An ample fund should be left for rewarding solid services, and perhaps more than was strictly requisite for the dignity of government should still remain invested in the crown. Mr. Fox, in this debate, took a leading share in support of the motion. He declared, however, in coincidence with the opinion of a member who had lately spoken, that he believed there was not virtue enough within these walls to accomplish so much wholesome reformation; but the virtue of necessity, he said, would at last animate the people, and, through them, it would likewise animate and correct that house. The virtue of necessity, sure

1. The heads of these bills were,
1, A bill for the better regulation of his majesty's civil establishment, and of certain public offices; for the limitation of pensions, and the suppression of useless and expensive places; and for applying the money saved from thence to the public service:—2, A bill for the sale of the forest, and other crown lands, rents, and hereditaments, with certain exceptions, and for applying the proceeds to public service; and for securing, ascertaining, and satisfying tenant rights and common, as well as other rights:—3, A bill for the more perfectly uniting to the crown the principality of Wales and the county palatine of Ches-
ter; and for the commodious administration of justice within the same; as also for abolishing certain offices now appertaining thereto, and for quieting dormant claims, ascertaining and securing tenant rights; and for the sale of forest and other crown lands in the said principality, and for applying the proceeds to public service:—4, A bill for uniting to the crown the duchy and county palatine of Lancaster, and for the suppression of unnecessary offices, and the sale of crown lands in the said principality:—5, A bill for uniting the duchy of Cornwall to the crown, with the same clauses.

CHAP.
XV.

1780.

in its principle, and irresistible in its progress, was an effectual reformer.

Of the public opinion that attended those debates in parliament, a strong testimony was given by the county meetings, petitions, and associations, in favour of reform. The great and populous county of York led the way in addressing parliament, and drew up a representation which served, in some measure, as the ground-work of other petitions from a number of counties and towns. It stated, as public grievances which demanded redress, the growth of our public debt; the enormous amount of existing debts, as well as the fear of more; the melancholy prospect of our declining resources; and the prodigal distribution of public money in pensions and sinecures, which gave unconstitutional influence to the crown.

January.

The county of Middlesex next stood forth, and other county petitions followed in pretty close succession.⁵

Feb. 8.

The petition of the county of York was introduced into the house of commons by Sir George Saville, who called upon the minister to declare, with the open dignity of a man, whether he meant to countenance or discourage the petition: His lordship had hitherto observed a timid and sullen taciturnity on subjects of economical reform. The minister, apparently hurt at Sir George Saville's question, said that the petition should have his consent to lie on the table; but, in leaving it to the attention of members, he must beg leave to be understood as offering no disrespect to the paper before the house, if he should enter on a subject more immediately urgent, viz: the question of ways and means.

⁵ Viz. Chester, Herts, Sussex, cesters, Wilts, Dorset, Devon, Northampton, Surrey, Cumberland, folk, Berks, Bucks, Nottingham, Bedford, Essex, Somerset, Glou. &c.

The day at length arrived, on which the mover was to introduce his promised plan of reformation. The principles of his intended change Mr. Burke affirmed to be safe, wholesome, and such as could not be affected by interest or caprice. He first proposed the abolition of such expensive jurisdictions as tended rather to corrupt than to administer justice. Commencing his reform with some of those unnecessary jurisdictions which are attached to the sovereignty itself, he observed of the English monarch, that he was not, as was commonly supposed, the head of a single and solid monarchy, not the chief actor on the theatre of public affairs, whose office was one and distinct; but like the king among strolling players, who had frequently subordinate parts to perform. He was king of England, prince of Wales, earl of Lancaster, and county palatine of Lancaster, as well as duke of Lancaster and duke of Cornwall. In all those petty principalities the useless forms of monarchy were to be supported at a high charge to the nation; and nothing but the dependence of nominees to those useless offices was reaped in return. Those five principalities he proposed to be swallowed up in the ordinary jurisdiction of the crown. His next object of reform was the disposal of all public estates, selling all forest lands, and thereby improving agriculture and increasing population. His proposal respecting the civil list was to pull down the enormous charges and establishments, the offspring of Gothic manners, which had been preserved to later ages by the inveteracy of habit. Of this nature were the offices of treasurer, cofferer of the household, the master of the household, and the whole board of green cloth. Without abolishing the number or employment of officers attendant on the person of the king, he wished to see the keepers of the buck-hounds, stag-hounds,

CHAP.

XV.

1780.

fox-hounds, or harriers, abolished, since it was unseemly in noblemen to be keepers of dogs, even though they were the king's dogs. After enumerating a few other offices, which appeared to him useless appendages and expences, Mr. Burke proposed the establishment of an order in payments, which should prevent unjust precedence or unequal receipts. He proposed farther the certainty of establishment, and the dissolution of all subordinate treasuries. These proposals, couched in five bills, were presented to the house, and took up a large portion of this tedious session. While the great plan of economy was yet depending, several auxiliary propositions were made in both houses. Early in the same month, a very full meeting of the lords assembled, on the day appointed for the earl of Shelburne's motion for examining the expenditure of public money, especially in pensions and contracts, and to propose a method of economy, by means of a commission of accounts, founded upon successive precedents in English history since the revolution. The lords in administration opposed this motion, chiefly on two grounds,—First, The informality, and even the incompetency, of one house of parliament to come to any resolution which went eventually to bind and conclude the proceedings of the other; and, secondly, because the institution of such a commission of accounts, though it had existed in the days of William and Anne, was yet unprecedented since the accession of the house of Hanover, as it had been found a nugatory, and even vexatious, institution. The debate ended in a rejection of the motion, but exhibited a strength of numbers in the opposition which announced a visible decline in the powers and influence of ministry.

February.

"In a few days after the disclosure of Mr. Burke's scheme of reform, Colonel Barré gave notice of

his intention to move for a committee of accounts, as a supplement to that larger plan. Such a committee, he said, would most easily correct the evils arising from the present mode of voting great sums of the public money without estimate, and be attended with other advantages. An unexpected assent was immediately given by the minister to this proposal.

CHAP.
XV.

1780.

Mr. Burke's establishment bill having been read a first and a second time without opposition, the order of the day for the house going into a committee upon it was called for on the 8th of March. At this period one of the minister's associates, who, far outstripped any of his party in resistance to the scheme of reform, boldly denied the competency of the house to discuss any measures of change upon the civil list; a revenue which he affirmed to be as much the private property of the king as the estate of any landholder in England was the property of that owner. Opposition seemed glad to avail themselves of this hint of Mr. Rigby, and insisted that the question of right should precede the order of the day. The friends of administration endeavoured to soften and explain away the apparent sense of the declaration, but evinced no inclination to bring the question of right to a parliamentary issue. On the question being put, the order of the day was voted by a majority, among whom was the ministerial and loyal Mr. Rigby. The establishment bill being thus brought before the committee, a debate took place on its first clause, for abolishing the office of third secretary of state. That clause was rejected by a majority still far from considerable, on the ministerial side.

March 8.

On a subsequent day, the next clause under- went discussion, viz. the proposal for the abolition of the board of trade, when the framers of the

March 10.

CHAP.
XV.

3780.

bill actually carried their point, by a majority of eight. This was not all their triumph; they had the felicity of, witnessing a dispute between the minister and the speaker, during the debate, in which the former was taxed with the exertion of influence in his ministerial capacity, which gave occasion to the severest invective. The next clause of Mr. Burke's bill that was submitted to the committee, was that for abolishing the offices of treasurer of the chamber, and others. At this point the fortune of opposition again ebbed, the first clause of the bill being lost on a division, and the succeeding questions rejected.

The last debate of the house before the spring recess, was introduced by the report of the committee of ways and means; of which the opposition attempted to defer the consideration till the petitions of the people on subjects of financial reformation should be heard and considered, but without success.

April 6.

On the resumption of business, after the recess, the subject of the county and city petitions was again vigorously pressed. The 6th of April was signalized by a motion of Mr. Dunning, on which the decision of the commons forms a memorable epoch in the history of parties. On that day Mr. Dunning, after reviewing the great reforming scheme, which had been hitherto discussed only in parts; after recounting the efforts of so great a portion of the nation in behalf of that cause, and the fruitless delivery of petitions from more than 100,000 electors, attributed its failure to the undue influence of the crown. He then moved for a resolution of the house, That the influence of the crown has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished. The lord advocate of Scotland (Mr. Dundas), either from a wish to strengthen the proposition into such harshness as should occa-

sion its rejection, or from some other unaccountable motive, proposed prefixing, as an amendment to the motion, the words '*it is now necessary to declare.*' In this amended state it passed by a majority of 18; and the minister, for the second time in this session, found himself in a minority. Pursuing his success still farther, Mr. Dunning advanced, as his second proposition, 'that the house should resolve to examine and correct abuses in the expenditure of the civil list, as well as in every other branch of the public revenue. This was also triumphantly carried. A third resolution was carried in the same spirit, which originated with Mr. Thomas Pitt, a front rank opponent of the ministry, 'that the house should attend the petitions, and redress the grievances, laid before them.' Mr. Fox pushed the victory home, by moving, that the resolutions should be immediately reported. This was done; and the dismay of the ministers was only equalled by the emulation of their opponents.

• But the moment after victory is sometimes as important for ultimate success as that before it. The ministry, though stunned, were not irretrievably fallen. An unusual recess was occasioned at this time by the speaker's illness; and, during that period, it may be guessed what efforts had been used by ministers to rally their broken ranks, and bring back deserters to their standard, when the career of opposition was stopped at the next debate, by a majority on their side of 51 votes. This debate had arisen from a motion of Mr. Dunning, that the house should address his majesty, requesting that neither dissolution nor prorogation of parliament should take place until the objects of the petitions should be answered. On the decision of this motion, by a majority of the very members who had voted the ever-memorable resolution

CHAP.

XXV.

1780.

of the 6th, Mr. Fox rose, with indignation, to expose the outrage on consistency, and the breach of solemn engagement, they had committed. On the 6th it had been voted, that the influence of the crown was increasing; and now, by a vote scarce two weeks after, the influence of the crown, in repelling the wishes of the nation, is aided and confirmed by those who had pledged themselves to the cause of reformation by a sacred and deliberate declaration. It was base, it was unmanly, it was treacherous. Lord North, as if to insult with ironical comfort the broken hopes of the petitioners, replied to the invective of opposition, that the petitions, and resolutions founded on them, were still open to consideration; but this defeat did in fact terminate the discussion. A motion by Sergeant Adair, for withholding farther supplies till the grievances of the people should be redressed, was negatived without dividing; and, when Dunning moved to receive the report of the committee, on the 10th of April, the question for the chairman's quitting the chair was carried by a majority of 43.

May 19.

While those extraordinary turns of fortune attended the contest of parties in parliament, and agitated, in proportion to their consequence, the general mind of the nation, an affair to which too little notice was paid in its origin, overwhelmed for a moment even party-spirit itself in the general danger of the country. The repeal of an act of King William, for preventing the growth of popery, had operated upon the lower and fanatical class of society in a manner suitable to the grossness of their religious and political prejudices. The alarm at the supposed growth of popery, which at first shewed itself in riots and insolent manifestoes among societies of low fanatics, and a few of the least respectable of the Scottish clergy, overspread, in a short time, the whole rabble of the two kingdoms.

Eighty-five corresponding societies, instituted on the plan of the Edinburgh protestant association, had a leader and representative in the house of commons itself, in the person of a wild insane branch of a noble Scottish family, the well-known Lord George Gordon. His speeches in parliament had attracted an audience from their extreme singularity, and their intemperance was pardoned, from the supposed good intentions of the speaker, although the sanity of his judgment was always suspected. Having presided for some time over the whole anticatholic associations formed throughout both kingdoms, this eccentric nobleman was in the habit of introducing his favourite scheme of resisting the growth of popery in a manner which sometimes amused the house of commons, but more frequently teased and interrupted them in the midst of serious business. With all the promptitude, the assurance, and the temerity, of a frantic head, he had more than once concluded his harangues on the protestant associations, by declaring that he could bring at any time from Scotland 120,000 men to support his petitions by force, if a peaceable assent should be denied.

The object of the associations was to obtain the repeal of an act lately passed, relieving his majesty's subjects of the catholic persuasion from certain penalties and disabilities imposed on them in the 11th and 12th years of William III. To give the petition on this subject better effect, the associators resolved to attend, with all their numbers, on the day of presenting it. Their president gave notice, by the public prints, that, on the day appointed for his moving the repeal, the whole body should assemble in St. Georges fields, to accompany their petitions to parliament. To prevent mistake, all supporters of the cause were to mount

CHAP.
XV.
1780.

CHAP.
XV.

1780.

Friday,
June 2.

a blue cockade on their hats, as the insignia of the protestant association.

On the day appointed, this band of fanatics, after dividing their vast concourse at the place of rendezvous, proceeded towards Westminster hall by different routes, in four separate bodies. Having blocked up all the avenues to both houses of parliament, they began the exercise of their new authority by compelling all the members whom they met on their way to parliament to assume the blue ribbon, or compelled them to promise an abrogation of the act in favour of papists. Many members with difficulty escaped out of their hands; all whom they met were insulted, and several were severely hurt.³ Surrounded, or rather besieged, in this disgraceful manner (for the mob twice attempted to break into both houses, and were twice repulsed by the spirit of the door-keepers⁶ and other officers), the houses of lords and commons assembled. Lord George Gordon, who, after accompanying the rabble, proceeded to take his seat in the house, went several times to the top of the gallery stairs, where he harangued the people on the subject of their petition, and recounted the names of those members who were most averse to his notion of repeal. Among these he particularly dis-

³ Among the members most grossly abused or insulted were, the archbishop of York, the lord-president of the council, Lord Mansfield, Lord Stormont, the duke of Northumberland, Lord Boston, the bishop of Litchfield, the Lords Hillsborough, Townsend, Willoughby de Broke, Ashburnham, St. John, and Dudley, the bishop of Lincoln. Of the members of the house of commons, Mr. Strahan and Welbore Ellis, Lord North, Lord Germaine, Lord Trentham, and some others. Mr. Burke, with

characteristic spirit, finding his passage beset, made his way with a drawn sword. The rabble, overawed by his resolute appearance, made an avenue, and let him pass.

⁶ On this occasion the courage of a young clergyman, who acted as assistant chaplain of the house of commons, was particularly memorable. He rebuked the rioters with great energy, and told their president, Lord George Gordon, to his face, that he was answerable for all the bloodshed that would ensue.

tinguished Mr. Burke, the member for Bristol. He added, that his majesty would certainly, on perceiving such numbers assembled for redress, send private orders to his ministers to grant it. The spirit of the house, though perhaps too tardy in passing resolutions for using the military force to the preservation of their own dignity, or in voting the commitment of their incendiary member, Lord George, to the Tower, was sufficiently displayed in rejecting the anticatholic motion, which had only for its supporters Alderman Bull, Sir James Lowther, and four other men of insignificant reputation. General Conway, and several other members, expostulated with the mischievous mover on the probable consequences of his conduct; and Colonel Gordon, a near relation of his lordship's, accosted him in these words.—' Lord George, if you intend to bring any of your rascally adherents into this house, when the first man enters, I will plunge my sword, not into his body, but into yours.' Lord George, like other insane persons when boldly rebuked, had not courage to resist the threat. Soon after this, a party of horse and foot arrived for the protection of the houses. Luckily for the prevention of bloodshed on that day, the entreaties of Justice Addington, who headed the detachment, prevailed on the mob to disperse; and clear the avenues; and the house having risen, the guards were ordered home. . .

CHAP.
XV.

1780.

But, though order was restored in this quarter of the town, the riot did not generally subside. The mob paraded in different directions from Palace-yard, and demolished some Roman catholic chapels before the military had time to arrive.

The tumult nearly subsided on the day following; but, on Sunday the 6^d of June, in the afternoon, the rioters assembled in large bodies; and attacked the chapels and dwelling-houses of the ca-

CHAP.
XV.

1, 80

tholics, in and about Moorfields. On Monday they collected again. Some of them paraded, with the relics of the havock which had been made in Moorfields, as far as Lord George Gordon's house. Others went in different directions, to burn and plunder the houses of obnoxious individuals; among others, the house of the excellent Sir George Saville, who had framed the bill of catholic toleration, was attacked and destroyed. At an early period of these outrages, the protestant association disclaimed, in a solemn manner, any knowledge or approbation of the rioters, and advised all faithful followers of their cause to support it by peaceable measures. Such an apology might undoubtedly be admissable from many harmless individuals in the association; but the name of this association cannot be mentioned without disgrace to its promoters, which had bigotry for its principle, persecution for its object; and Lord George Gordon for its patron. The commons adjourned from the 2^d to the 6th of June; but the lords met on the 3^d, and passed a motion for addressing his majesty, requesting the crown to give immediate orders for prosecuting the authors and abettors of yesterday's disturbances. On the 6th instant, above 200 members of the commons had the courage to make their way through immense and alarming crowds, whose excesses were already to be seen in the conflagration of houses in every quarter of the town. They found Westminster hall, and the avenues to the houses, lined with soldiers. Their resolutions were to be passed with a furious mob waiting for them in the streets, and soldiers, with fixed bayonets, at the door, to preserve the freedom of debate. They passed, however, some very proper resolutions for asserting their own privileges,—for a committee to inquire into the late and present disturbances, and to discover their au-

thors and promoters; for prosecuting such authors and abettors; for reimbursing the sufferers by these riots; and, lastly, for hearing the petitions of the protestant association, but not until peace and order should be reinstated. On the intelligence of fresh tumults and disturbances, a hasty adjournment took place.

CHAP.
XV.
1780.

Some of the lords assembled on the 5th of the month; but the arrival of several noblemen severely maltreated by the mob, and the account of Lord Sandwich having been assaulted and wounded, to the danger of his life, determined their lordships to resolve, that no deliberations of their assembly could, with propriety, be held till the arm of executive authority should rescue them from insult and danger. They adjourned accordingly to the 19th.

This day and the following one were indeed the most dreadful that London had witnessed for centuries past. After various depredations, the mob proceeded to Newgate, and demanded the release of all the prisoners. The keeper was sufficiently resolute to refuse, but went to consult the sheriffs. While the magistrates were deliberating what measures to take, the gaol was set on fire, and speedily taken by storm. Three hundred prisoners were enlarged, of whom the greater part immediately joined the insurgents. The work of devastation now became general, and in some quarters of the town contributions were levied. The prisons of Newgate and Clerkenwell, the Compters, the Fleet, the King's bench, and the gaols of Southwark, were emptied of their felons and debtors. The dwellings of Sir John Fielding, and the venerable Lord Mansfield, were plundered and burnt. His lordship with difficulty escaped to a friend's house, from whence he was taken to the protection of the queen's house, from the pursuit and fury of the

CHAP.
XV.

1780.

mob. All the catholic innkeepers and distillers were, by their principles and the nature of their property, more peculiarly exposed to depredation. After destroying the houses of the two Langdales, distillers in Holborn, the mob regaled themselves with the raw spirits which they found on their premises, and drank such quantities, that many died on the spot, or lay till they were suffocated among the ruins.

During these alarming transactions, the military had acted but partially. The civil power had delayed to interfere with sufficient firmness at the first appearance of danger; and it was now impossible to act with effect, without appealing to the last resource for subduing disturbances. A privy council was convened, at which the king was present. At this meeting the attorney-general recommended that the executive power should, for the present, supersede the civil; that the riots should be declared rebellious, and the military be ordered to act, when necessity should require, without orders from the magistrates. An order to this effect was made out, and the beneficial effects were speedily experienced. By this time the spirit of insurrection, far from being glutted, seemed to grow with the progress of destruction. All business was at a stand. The shut-up shops; the numerous conflagrations (for London was seen blazing in thirty places from one spot); the flight of affrighted and houseless inhabitants, wandering with what pieces of their furniture they could convey from the flames; the shouts of the infuriated destroyers; and, at intervals, the heavy discharges of the soldiers firing in platoons; these sights and sounds converted a scene which, a few days before, had reposed in peace and security, to the image of a city taken by sack and storm.

June 17.

But the attempts which were this day made on the bank, and the threats which were understood

to be thrown out by the rioters of cutting the water pipes which supplied the city from the Thames, roused the activity of the government, and drew out loyal associations of the people, to avert the last extremities. A great many regiments had, besides, been rapidly marched from the country; so that the exertions of the military, on the evening of the 7th, became more serious, in proportion to the danger. In several places a regular firing of the military commenced; and such was the effect, that the general estimate of the killed and wounded on the side of the insurgents has amounted to 450. Exclusive of this number, there must have been many who were removed while their blood was yet flowing.

Before the dawn of the 8th, there was a total cessation of the riots, though the sensation of alarm still strongly prevailed, and strong detachments of troops were stationed at every important quarter of the capital. The house of commons met; but, as Westminster was under martial law, they adjourned to the 19th. On the afternoon of the 8th day, Lord George Gordon was arrested on a charge of high treason, at his house in Welbeck street, and escorted, under the strongest guard that ever accompanied a prisoner, to the Tower. Many of his meaner associates of the protestant association were sent to humbler places of confinement, and atoned on the gallows for those crimes which the conduct of their noble president certainly equalled in atrocity, though it escaped justice under the plea of insanity. To complete the satisfaction of public justice, the lord mayor, whose neglect of seasonable interference was justly held as one of the passive causes of the late dreadful excesses, was prosecuted by the attorney-general, and convicted of neglect. The gross criminality of this magistrate, and the odious behaviour of the two alder-

CHAP.

XV.

1780.

men Sawbridge and Bull, who offered countenance to the rioters, by every demonstration of favour that did not hazard their own safety, gave disgust to all parties, except the rabble, whom they patronized. Among the first who had courage to pronounce a public execration on those criminals of the opulent class, was the once distinguished John Wilkes. He upbraided them in every public meeting with their offensive conduct. He was eminently active in assisting as a magistrate where the military were called in; and he checked, at its first birth, an audacious production of the press, which threatened to inflame and justify the spirit of rebellion.

June 10.

On the adjourned meeting of the house of commons, an undeserved compliment was paid to the petition of the city respecting the repeal of the catholic toleration. It appears that, even among some of the friends of toleration, different ideas were entertained how far toleration should extend. In compliance with the fears of the less liberal tolerants, Sir George Saville brought in a bill for disqualifying catholics from the privilege of instructing youth as scholars or boarders. This invidious restriction, so unlike the manly mind of its proposer, was opposed by all the eloquence of Fox and Burke, but passed in the commons. It was rejected, however, in the lords.

On the 8th of July, his majesty closed the session, with an appropriate address on the subjects of foreign and domestic interest. The strongest acknowledgments were made from the throne for the zeal and unanimity of parliament, in supporting the real interests of the country. The exertions of his majesty's fleets and armies, it was added, had given a prosperous turn to the fate of war in America; and every prospect was held out that his majesty's once faithful subjects in those colonies would again re-

turn to ~~the~~ with the parent country. The commons were thanked for the liberal supplies of the year; and a promise was made that they should be effectually applied. His majesty concluded by noticing the late alarming events in the metropolis, and advising the legislature, 'that it should be their care to impress on the minds of the people this important truth,—that rebellious insurrections, to reform or resist the laws, must end either in the destruction of those who make the attempt, or in the subversion of our free and happy constitution.'

CHAP.
XV.

1785.

On the 1st of September, a proclamation was issued for the dissolution of the present, and for calling a new, parliament.

The supplies for the service of the year amounted to £21,196,496. The number of men in arms amounted to 85,000 seamen, and 35,000 land troops, including invalids, besides the forces abroad. The ways and means for raising these supplies consisted of the usual land-tax, and tax upon spiritous and brewed liquors, to the amount of £2,705,000. The sum of £12,000,000 was raised by annuities, and £480,000 by the lottery. A vote of credit was granted for £1,000,000, and several new taxes were imposed.⁷

⁷ These were on coals, malt, salt, coffee, chocolate, stamp revenue wines spirits, foreign wines, ciphers, and advertisements.

CHAP. XVI.

Siege of Charlestown by Sir Henry Clinton . . . Defence and capitulation of the garrison . . . Capture of Fort Mifflin by the Spaniards . . . Pursuit of the continentals through South Carolina by the detachment of Tarleton . . . Cornwallis prepares for penetrating to the northern provinces of Carolina . . . Premature attempts of the loyalists in that quarter . . . Movement of American forces from the south to support them . . . Situation of Cornwallis's army . . . General Gates advances to meet the British commander . . . Battle of Camden . . . Preparations of Cornwallis for a southern campaign after his victory . . . Defeat of Major Ferguson . . . Retrograde movements of the British troops . . . View of hostilities in the north . . . Arrival of Rohambau's auxiliary forces . . . Apostacy of Arnold from the American cause . . . His conference with Major André . . . Unfortunate arrestation and execution of that officer . . . Partial action of Admiral Rodney with the Spaniards . . . Rupture with the Dutch . . . Armed neutrality . . . Disclosure of the Dutch and American treaty . . . Important capture by the Spaniards . . . Movements of the hostile fleets in the West Indies . . . Partial encounters . . . Junction of the French and Spanish fleets . . . Tremendous hurricane in the West Indies.

CHAP.
XVI.
278a.

BY the repulse of Admiral D'Estaing at Savannah, which has been already related, and his departure from the American coast, the operations of our commander in chief in America became bolder and more successful. His first efforts were judiciously addressed to the capture of Charlestown, and the reduction of South Carolina. The troops destined for this expedition sailed, un-

der the escort of Admiral Arbuthnot, from Sandyhook, on the 26th of December 1799, accompanied by Sir Henry Clinton in person. The passage from thence to the mouth of the Savannah was long delayed by tempestuous and adverse winds; it was the 1st of January before they reached Ty-lece, the place appointed for rendezvous. Proceeding from thence to the harbour of North Edisto, they were detained for nearly three months in several unimportant places, and in clearing the passage of river Ashley, before they could break ground against the works of the city. Admiral Arbuthnot was but little troubled with the resistance of the American marine in Charlestown. He passed the bar of that harbour under a heavy fire, but with little bloodshed. Both Americans and French retired from their station; and many of their vessels were sunk by the enemy, to serve as obstacles to the besiegers, instead of being actively used in their defence. The slow advances of the British army had given time to the provincials to enlarge and strengthen the defences of Charlestown. These now consisted of redoubts, lines, and batteries, extending from Ashley to Cooper river, mounted with eighty cannons and mortars, fronted by a deep canal of water, at each extremity of which an impassable swamp oozed to the neighbouring river, and extended the defence. Between the canal and the batteries were rows of abatis and a double picketed ditch. The works at the right and left enclosed the canal; whilst, in the centre, a horn-work of masonry being filled up, served as a sort of citadel.

April 9

When the British summons to surrender had been firmly refused, and the first parallel of the besiegers formed, their batteries were opened, and soon made a visible impression on the town; but still the communication of the country and the

CHAP.
XVI.

garrison being kept open across Cooper river, a reinforcement of 700 men opportunely arrived, to strengthen the besieged; and the cavalry of Lincoln still traversed the country to the eastward, to keep the passage open for reinforcements, or eventually for retreat. To cut off those advantages, our fleet had orders to pass Fort-Moultrie, and gain the command of the water between the fort and Charlestown. The strength of Fort-Moultrie was formidable. As the British advanced, it opened a heavy cannonade; but in the face of this resistance Arbuthnot pressed forward with his little squadron, and effected that important service. From this time Sir Henry Clinton felt no fear of the hostile communications. He detached Colonel Webster, with 1400 men, to attack the American covering army. Colonel Tarleton led the vanguard of this division, and performed the service with such signal success, that the provincial cavalry and militia were routed and dispersed at Biggin's bridge, 32 miles from Charlestown, with the loss of all their stores and baggage. The head branches of Cooper's river were thus passed, and possessed by our army, and the country to the eastward was still farther cleared of the enemy's detachments. It was the division of Colonel Webster who effected these advantages. The marquis of Cornwallis arriving at this period, with a detachment of the army from New-York, joined his troops with those of Webster, and superseded that active officer in the command. Charlestown was now nearly inclosed by the besiegers.

The second parallel of the British was finished on the 20th of April, and the third parallel on the 6th of May. Fort-Moultrie surrendered on that day to Captain Hudson of the navy, who landed on Sullivan island, and attacked it by land, while the ships prepared to batter it from the water. To

complete the misfortune of the enemy, the remnant of their routed cavalry, which had been collected from the recent defeat at Biggin's bridge, fell again victims to the valour of Tarleton, in a second engagement, on the banks of the Jantée. For two days after the third parallel opened upon Charlestown, an incessant firing was kept up, and the besiegers had advanced to the very verge of the ditch. Dreading the horrors of an assault; the Americans now offered to capitulate on terms which had been before offered them, but rejected; the British general humanely acceded. The garrison were allowed to march out with *some* of the honours of war. The continental troops and seamen were detained as prisoners; the citizens and militia were dismissed as prisoners on parole. No plunder was permitted; a circumstance honourable to the British name, which, it is much to be regretted, had been partially sullied by some acts of inhumanity during the late successes of Tarleton's legion.¹ The loss of the British during the siege amounted to 76 killed, and 189 wounded. The number of slain in the garrison was greater than our, that of the wounded somewhat less. The prisoners included many general officers of distinction, and private men to the number of 6000, with 100 pieces of ordnance, and large stores. In the list of the British officers who signalized their abilities in this siege, the most conspicuously useful, if we omit the name of Tarleton, was the chief of the engineers, Major Moncrieff. On a former occasion, the siege of Savannah had afforded this officer a favourable field for his genius in defensive operations; the siege of Charlestown now conferred on him the highest celebrity for knowledge in the science of attack.

¹ Vide Stedman's American War, vol. II, p. 183, in which some atrocious instances of rape and cruelty are recorded.

CHAP.

XV.

1781.

While our arms were thus employed in South Carolina, the earlier anticipation of war on the side of Spain, and the quick announce of it to her colonies, had enabled that enemy to attack our settlements on the Mississippi, with unexpected success. In the month of January, one of their commanders, Don Bernardo de Galoes, sailed from New-Orleans with 2000 men, and a number of vessels, and landed at Dog river, about four miles from Fort-Mobille, on the 25th of February. From thence he proceeded against the fort, which had not 200 hands of every description and colour to defend it. With a battery of 11 pieces of cannon, the enemy were soon enabled to bring so weak a fortification to capitulate. Very honourable terms were granted. The surrender was, however, regretted, as General Campbell was on his march from Pensacola with 700 men; a force which, it was supposed, from the superior valour of our countrymen, would have been adequate to relieve it.

By the fall of Charlestown, the whole province of South Carolina seemed to be effectually secured to the victors; and every measure was pursued that could encourage the hopes of the loyalists, or intimidate the disaffected. A general submission to the royal cause, and oaths of allegiance, prevailed in the southern parts of the province. The fugitive force of the Americans, who had fled across the Santee, after having in vain attempted to act as the covering army of Charlestown, during its siege, were at the same time successfully pursued by Colonel Tarleton's detachment of Cornwallis's army. By a march, almost unexampled for rapidity in the annals of war,² this active officer overtook the provincials at Waxhaws, on the borders of North-Carolina, and routed them once more, with the

² Colonel Tarleton's troop marched 105 miles in 54 hours. °

loss of all their baggage and ammunition. The British troops, says a recorder of these events, who has detailed them with the assurance of an eyewitness, were entitled to great praise for their ardour and activity; but the virtue of humanity was totally forgot. In plainer terms, the successes of Tarleton were perpetually tarnished by wanton bloodshed, plunder, and destruction.

CHAP.
XVI

1783.

After these successes, and a variety of regulations for the future management of the recovered province, General Clinton re-embarked for New-York, leaving Lord Cornwallis in command of the army that remained, amounting to 6000 men.

June 5.

The first object of the British commander, which was an expedition into North-Carolina, was necessarily delayed by the extreme heat of the season, and the difficulty of finding provisions, before the gathering of the harvest. The troops were in the meantime so disposed in cantonments, as to cover the frontiers both of South-Carolina and Georgia; and to secure their internal quiet. The principal force on the frontiers was at Camden, under command of Lord Rawdon. Two battalions, which covered the country between Camden and Georgetown, being advanced to Cheraw-hill, on the river Piacce, Georgetown was garrisoned by a detachment. Camden, which was to form the principal magazine for the intended expedition, was connected with the district of Ninety-six, by a strong garrison, at a post called Rocky-mount; and to other important stations, proportionate detachments of this small army were allotted. But, impatient of the expected succours from Cornwallis, the loyalists of North-Carolina were unable to wait for his co-operation. His lordship had everywhere sent emissaries and agents among them, beseeching them to keep quiet, and only look to the collections of stores, till the season should be farther advanced,

CHAP.

XVI.

1780.

Time.

While he himself was occupied in securing the conquered south, by internal organization. But when men's minds are on the eve of insurrection, when they are waiting for their signal to rise, under the suspicious vigilance of enemies on every side, it is not easy to preserve that patience which their safer coadjutors may find it prudent to inculcate. The northern loyalists assembled prematurely, and by their abortive attempts furnished a pretext to the American government to exercise such harshness over those suspected of the same disaffection, as either deprived them of the power of exertion, or drove them into voluntary exile. Eight hundred of these unfortunate men escaped to the British posts on the southern frontiers; many of them men of property and respectability, though now driven from their families under every species of hardship and privation. They arrived safe at Major Macarthur's detachment, on Cheraw-hill.

The misfortunes of the loyalists were not confined to the northern province. In South-Carolina they had soon reason to perceive that the arms of the British would, by their splendid victory, afford but a temporary protection, and that the seeds of their future calamities were already sown. By the arbitrary order of General Clinton, the real and faithful loyalists beheld arms put into the hands of all the provincials indiscriminately, who chose to submit, either from motives of fear or of treachery. No medium was observed in the regulation respecting prisoners; they were declared rebels, and bound to abide by the consequence of rebellion, if they did not swear allegiance, and convert their passport into a certificate of loyalty. It was not wonderful that submission, thus compelled, should have clothed innumerable enemies in the uniform of loyal militia, and placed arms in the hands of those who could not be trusted. The sincere loy-

alists saw, and complained with justice, that the oath of allegiance had not been left as a matter of freer choice; and that they were unworthily mingled in the ranks with spies and secret enemies.

CHAP.

. XVI.

1780.

Amidst these discontents, intelligence came, that detachments from General Washington's army were arriving, under different leaders, to protect the northern frontiers, and raise again the republican standard in the south. Besides baron de Kalbe, who had advanced as far as Hillsborough, the other American generals, Porterfield, Caswell, Rutherford, and Sumpter, were hastening with different divisions, and more were expected, to reinforce them. General Gates, with the laurels of Saratoga on his head, was to conduct the expedition, while Colonel Sumpter, a very active provincial officer, led their advanced posts as far as the Catawba settlement. Alarmed by these movements, Lord Rawdon ordered Macarthur's division at Cherawhill to fall back from their advanced situation. In the meantime, two instances of treachery evinced the prevailing spirit of the South-Carolinians. An officer, of the name of Lisle, led off a whole battalion of their militia to the American quarters at Catawba; and in the north-east of the province, another battalion rose on their commanding officer, and deserted to North-Carolina. By these desertions, the enemy were enabled to act on the offensive. Colonel Sumpter proceeded boldly to attack the British outposts at Rocky-mount, with 900 men, a post defended by far inferior numbers. Of these a considerable portion were American refugees, men indifferently armed and disciplined, and easily liable to fall by a bold surprize. They fled accordingly, with precipitation, and victory would have declared for Sumpter's corps, had not the charges of Tarleton's infantry legion, which were made with fixed bayonets, and the timely aid

CHAP.
XVI.

1780.
July 30.

of a small reinforcement, recovered the day, and repulsed the Americans with considerable loss.

By this time the different corps of the enemy, under the leaders already mentioned, had joined, and crossed the frontiers. General Gates having taken the chief command on the 27th of July, Lord Rawdon moving forward to Camden, came in sight of their main army on the opposite shore of Lynche's creek; but fearing, from the movements of Gates, that his advanced position might expose him to the danger of being surrounded, his lordship retreated to Camden, determining to await the arrival of Cornwallis with the main army. The commander in chief setting out from Charlestown on the 10th, arrived at Camden after three days march. The following day was spent by both armies in reconnoitering each other's position, and preparing for a pitched battle, to which the advance of Gates announced his disposition. The numbers of Cornwallis being diminished by the number of his sick, he could not muster much more than 2000 effective men, of which a fourth were provincials. The numbers of Gates' army have been differently represented, from 5000 to 7000. But, confiding in the valour and discipline of his men, and justly regarding a retreat in these circumstances to be scarcely less pernicious than defeat, Cornwallis decided on giving battle. Gates had no advantage but that of numbers; his situation was unfavourably chosen, and his dispositions for the action unaccompanied with the usual symptoms of his vigour and sagacity. On the other side, every preparation announced that Cornwallis was to engage with all the force and fortitude which prudent men are found to display when they quit their usual track of caution, to hazard a bold measure. A swamp on each side secured the flanks of the British army. At break of day, Cornwallis

made his last disposition for the attack. The front line was made up of two divisions, under Colonel Webster, and Lord Rawdon, an officer who, at the age of twenty-five, had already earned the reputation in arms which he has so long and brilliantly increased. The main body of the artillery, consisting but of four pieces, were directed by Lieutenant Macleod. The 71st regiment, with two six-pounders, formed a second line, or reserve; and in the rear, the cavalry stood ready to charge or pursue. The American army was drawn up in like manner, in two lines, with their artillery divided between them. At break of day of the 16th of August, Colonel Webster was ordered to charge the enemy's left wing, composed of the Virginia militia, which was done with so much vigour, that the enemy broke, and fled on the first onset. Lord Rawdon began the action against their right division with no less spirit; but here, and in the centre, a better resistance was maintained. So different was the spirit they displayed, that the provincial regiment of baron de Kalbe charged with the fixed bayonet, and was not repulsed without a severe and bloody struggle. The total flight, however, of the Virginian militia, exposed the adjacent body of the enemy to be taken in flank; the British light infantry, judiciously leaving the pursuit of the fugitives, to pursue this advantage, wheeled to charge the resisting battalions on the left; and after a combat of three quarters of an hour, forced them into confusion and flight in all directions. The cavalry sallied out to complete their route, and kept up the pursuit for 28 miles from the scene of action. Between 800 and 900 of the Americans were killed in flight or battle, and about 1000 made prisoners, including the wounded; with all their equipage, stores, ammunition, and waggons. General Gates, unable to rally any considerable body of

CHAP.
XVI.
1780.

CHAP.
XVI.
1780.

his army, retired first to Charlotte, and then to Hillsborough, in North-Carolina, 180 miles from the field of battle. The total loss of the British amounted to 375.

Thus, by one injudicious engagement, the army of Gates was ruined and dispersed. The only remaining force of the enemy that was yet entire, was that under Sumpter, on the north side of the Wateree. To prevent this force from becoming a rallying-point to the enemy, the British commander dispatched his light infantry, and the legion of Tarleton, under that enterprising officer, to march next morning, for the purpose of surprizing this corps. Tarleton set out with his detachment of 350 men, and pursued the retreat of Sumpter so closely, that he entered the American camp, and seized many of their arms before they knew of his approach. Of 750 continentals, 150 were killed, and 300 made prisoners. Between 200 and 300 British and loyal American prisoners in Sumpter's camp were released, and a quantity of captured stores were recovered. This acquisition, including 1000 stand of arms, and 2 pieces of cannon, cost the victors only 15 killed and wounded; and it is the more remarkable, for being achieved by only one half of Tarleton's little troop, the other half, on arriving at Fishing-creek, being so much spent with heat and fatigue, that they could proceed no farther.

Cornwallis's way was now opened to North-Carolina, and nothing was wanting to ensure success, but a certainty of finding supplies of provisions. A short delay was necessarily occasioned for the attainment of this object, during which time the commander in chief addressing his attention to the regulation of the southern province, found it necessary to exhibit some spectacles of severity for checking the traitorous correspondence of the disaffected

Carolinians with the enemy's army. Several estates of those who had broken their parole were confiscated, and some who had been taken in arms were consigned to the punishment of traitors. CHAP. XVI.
1780.

On the 8th of September, every thing seemed prepared for the northern expedition, and the British commander having penetrated the hostile settlement of Waxhaws, reached the town of Charlotte. But, while his lordship was taking measures for establishing a post of strength at this place, the unwelcome news arrived of the destruction of a corps under Major Ferguson, with the fall of that officer in the fatal engagement. A part of the commander's plan had been to detach Major Ferguson to the frontiers, as one of the advanced guards of the British army. Colonel Clarke, an inhabitant of Georgia, had collected a force for the service of congress, and made an unsuccessful attack on Augusta, but had been repulsed. In attempting to intercept the retreat of this defeated body, Ferguson was overtaken, at King's mountain, by 1500 of the back settlers of that quarter, a hardy and ferocious race of men, who, being well mounted, armed with rifles, and carrying no encumbrance of baggage, were peculiarly formidable to the slow movements of regular infantry. By this body of horsemen the little force of Ferguson were cut to pieces or taken; and this single disaster disconcerted the whole plan of Cornwallis. The British now retreated from Charlotte. Colonel Tarleton was recalled from his active hostilities against the straggling parties of Sumpter, Clarke, and other bands of the Americans, in the eastern parts of the province; a retreat which he effected, not without extreme hazard, and only by his usual exertions of gallantry. At Blackstock hill he fought another action with Sumpter, whose attacks he endeavoured to anticipate by a surprise; and, without wait-

Oct. 9.

CHAP.
XVI.
1780.

ing for his infantry, engaged with only eighty cavalry. The victory was claimed by the Americans; but the fact of Tarleton's cutting his way through superior numbers is indisputable, and, by keeping the enemy at bay, had all the utility of a victory, as far as his own safety was concerned.

On the retreat of Cornwallis to the southward, the head-quarters of the enemy took the place of our own at Charlotte, where General Green arrived on the 2^d of December, and on the following day General Gates resigned to him the command. Gates retired with a reputation diminished by the late action with Cornwallis, but without any mark of disrespect from his country, which, in spite of the field of Camden, could not forget the conqueror of Burgoyne. With these transactions closed the campaign of this year in South Carolina.

By the absence of Sir Henry Clinton, with a great number of troops, from New-York, during a part of the winter and spring of the present year, the strength of the British army was materially weakened in that quarter; and, from the severity of the season, which froze even the arms of the sea, so as to be capable of bearing the weight of artillery, the northern capital was rendered still more weakened, by being deprived of its natural defences. These combining circumstances might have brought the possession of New-York into question, if the army of Washington had been sufficiently strong to have attempted a descent. But things were far otherwise; the American commander kept within his lines, with his army huddled, at Moristown, in want of almost every comfort, and too much drained by the detachment sent southward, under Gates, to attempt offensive hostilities. No achievement was therefore attempted on either side during the severity of the season, except a descent on Staten island by the Ameri-

cans, under Lord Stirling, which proved unsuccessful; and an expedition on the side of the British against a hostile post, called Young house, in the neighbourhood of White plains, which was gallantly captured by a small band under Colonel Morton. By the thawing of the ice around New-York, the city regained its insular advantages; and the British general, Knyphausen, who commanded in the absence of Clinton, was enabled to resume offensive operations. Encouraged by the accounts of Washington's distresses, and of a mutiny reigning in his camp, several regiments of the royal army were conducted by Knyphausen and his lieutenants, Robertson and Tyron, to the Jerseys, to attempt an impression on the enemy's quarters. But the whole success of the expedition amounted only to burning some flourishing farms at Connecticut, and a few similar hostilities, which tended rather to irritate than to weaken the provincials.

Proceeding from Connecticut to Springfield, our troops found the Americans, under General Maxwell, so well disposed to receive them, that a retreat was ordered to Elizabethtown, and the enemy, in their turn, became the pursuers. The 22^d regiment, however, covered the retreat so firmly, as to keep them perfectly in check. On the arrival of General Sir Henry Clinton, a number of movements in the British army seemed to announce the intention of an expedition up the North river, to West point. By these appearances Washington was alarmed for his strong holds in the highlands, and immediately set out to secure their possession. But he marched with great deliberation, cautious of removing too far from his head-quarters, until the future movements of Sir Henry Clinton should announce his real intention; and he had proceeded only fifteen miles, when information was brought, that the British, instead of going up the North river, were marching over the

CHAP.

XVI.

1780.

June 7

CHAP.
XVI.

1780.

same track by which they had so lately advanced, and retreated towards Springfield. He immediately dispatched a reinforcement to General Green, who held the strong passes, to the upper country, with Springfield a mile in his front; his force being chiefly composed of the Jersey brigades, supported by the neighbouring militia. The reception of the British by a handful of men at Springfield, was such as to convince them that all attempts upon a country, still better defended by nature and by numbers, would be bloody and doubtful; so that the idea of attacking Green on the Short hills was laid aside, and the burning of Springfield, with the desolation of the neighbouring country, was all the glory of this second enterprise. The Americans made the retreat of our troops as insecure as it was inglorious; and, enraged at the sight of their native country lying in ashes, or burning with conflagrations, harassed them with vindictive pursuit. On the side of Washington, an offensive operation, scarcely more successful, was soon after attempted. He dispatched General Wayne to attack Bergen point, a post where the British had left some of their cattle for provisions, under a small escort of seventy men. The force of Wayne amounted to 2000, and he succeeded in carrying off some of the cattle; but the guard, throwing themselves into a block-house, repulsed his superior numbers, with the loss of more men than their own numbers amounted to.

The expected succours of France at length reached America. On the 10th of July, seven ships of the line, with frigates and transports, and 6000 men on board, arrived at Rhode island, under the French Admiral Ternay, and the General Count de Rochambeau; and a commission arriving from France, appointing Washington a lieutenant-general of France, put the American general at the

head of Rochambeau and all his forces. The British fleet, under Admiral Arbuthnot, was now inferior to the French; but the arrival of six ships of the line from England soon gave it a decided superiority; and it sailed round Long island, to co-operate with General Clinton, in a newly proposed enterprize against Rhode island. Washington, observing the motions of the British, advanced, as a check upon them, to King's bridge; but, on seeing that his movement had obliged the other commander to abandon his plan of attack, he thought it prudent to retire again, for fear of a general action. A disagreement between Clinton and Arbuthnot was ascribed, in part, as the cause of their scheme being abortive. Arbuthnot, however, succeeded so far to the interest of the service, as to block up the French squadron; while the land troops, under Clinton, were disposed of for an attack upon the French auxiliaries. By the arrival of his French allies, it became necessary for Washington to hold a conference, and consult for their common measures, with the French commanders; a circumstance which occasioned him to be absent for some days from his army.

During this time, a scheme of the deepest importance was formed by one of his own officers, for striking a blow at the American cause, which he had for some time resolved to abandon, by delivering the strong post of West point, on the North river, to Sir Henry Clinton; and thus enabling the British, almost without an effort, to cut off the army of Washington from connection with the inland and middle colonies. This apostate was the once famous Arnold, who, after performing many brilliant services to the colonists, had commanded in Philadelphia after it was evacuated by the British forces. In this latter command, the conduct of Arnold became displeasing to his countrymen;

CHAP.
XVI.
1780.

he affected a splendour of life little suited to the severity of his sober countrymen, and which, with republican jealousy, they suspected to be inconsistent with the fortune he possessed. They scrupled not to tax him with speculation of the public funds. While the popular clamour ran strong against him, he appealed for redress of character to congress, as well as for an investigation into his accounts, in terms which were deemed disrespectful. The examination of his conduct and accounts produced no good to his reputation; and, though the charge of speculation was not publicly confirmed, he was reprimanded for general misconduct. Arnold, unable to forget the real or supposed injustice of his countrymen, secretly determined on deserting them. In this state of irritation, he could easily persuade himself that his political creed respecting the quarrel with the mother country had been changed by recent events; and he only delayed returning to the British cause till he could effect some important service. Having for some time corresponded with Sir Henry Clinton respecting the delivery of West point, Major André, the aide-de-camp to our commander, undertook to confer with him, and was conducted from the Vulture sloop of war to a place which, without the knowledge or consent of André, was within the American lines. After he had landed, the Vulture was unfortunately obliged to shift her station, from a gun being brought to bear upon her from the shore. André, unable to procure a boat to reach her, was obliged, after his conference with Arnold, to attempt returning by land to New-York. Bearing a pass from the American general, under the assumed name of John Anderson, and having changed his dress, he had already passed the American out-posts, when he was stopped by three straggling patrols, who sprung from the woods

near the road, and, receiving no satisfactory answers, which were made still more suspicious by the unfortunate prisoner offering a bribe if they would suffer him to pass, conducted him to their commanding officer. In his second examination, André still assumed the name described in his passport, and desired it might be sent to the American commander, with an account of his detention. It may be easily supposed that Arnold speedily provided for his own safety, when he heard that the supposed John Anderson had been arrested. On the news of Arnold's escape, André avowed his name, and the whole circumstances of the transaction, claiming the fair treatment of a prisoner, who had not come within the American lines by his own knowledge or consent. But the board of American officers, who sat as a court-martial on this occasion, adhering to the naked fact, that he had been in disguise within their lines, by a rigid interpretation of the laws of war, condemned this accomplished and amiable officer to a death unworthy of his life. He was doomed to suffer as a spy. The earnest interference of the British commander was applied in vain to save him. Even his own supplication, conveyed to Washington in the most affecting terms, that he might be shot, instead of dying as a malefactor, was coldly rejected. The irritation of the American army at the treachery which they had so harrowly escaped, was naturally great, and the point of right seems, by strict interpretation, to be decided against the life of André; but a nobler boast than mere legal justification would have accrued to Washington, had he extended mercy on this occasion. The execution of André drew forth sensations of sympathy from the American spectators of his fate, which did them more honour than the harsh justice of those who condemned him.

CHAP.
XIV

1780.

An adjustment was about this time attempted between the hostile powers in America, for the mutual release of prisoners; a measure which the policy of congress, knowing the difficulty of our recruiting from Europe, had anxiously endeavoured to avoid. But the clamours of their own subjects, who saw their friends so long detained in captivity, brought them at last to partial accommodation, from necessity more than choice. In this, however, the privates of Burgoyne's army were unfortunately not included, and the troops who had surrendered on convention were disgracefully kept prisoners during the war. Such were the chief transactions of the summer months. When the winter began to set in, the British troops confined themselves to New-York and its dependencies. The French troops remained at Rhodé island, and General Washington, still distressed by the want of bread, and many other privations, which obliged him to discharge a part of his new levies, continued to hold the mountainous grounds adjacent to North river.

Our affairs in Europe and the West Indies wore at this period a more favourable aspect. The appointment of Admiral Rodney to the command of a part of the Channel fleet was soon followed by the relief of Gibraltar, which had continued in a state of blockade since the commencement of hostilities with Spain. It seemed reserved for this commander to revive the dormant glory of our maritime achievements. He had been but a few days at sea, when he captured a rich fleet of twenty-three sail of Spanish ships, laden with stores, from S^t. Sebastian to Cadiz. A week after, he came in sight of eleven ships of the line, of the same nation, off Cape S^t. Vincent, commanded by Don Juan Langara, which, in spite of a lee shore and tempestuous winter weather, he pursued by day and night, till he succeeded in cut-

ting them off from the land, and the *Montarca*, their headmost ship, struck to the flag ship of the British fleet, after an obstinate engagement. Another of the largest Spanish ships blew up early in the action; four of their fleet were taken, and carried into Gibraltar; two others had struck, but were driven on shore, and could not be got off. The enemy, though inferior in number, had kept up a running fight with considerable bravery. The victory cost our fleet 194 men killed and wounded. After proceeding from thence to the relief of Gibraltar, Admiral Rodney returned again to England, and then set sail for his station in the West Indies.

In the meantime, the differences which had been accommodated between Britain and Holland in 1776, broke out, and were fast verging to hostility. The clandestine supply of warlike stores to America by the Dutch merchants might be imputed as no inconsiderable cause of the success of the revolted provinces during their unequal contest. When France became an accessory to the war, the Dutch became the carriers of naval stores for the French also; and our repeated remonstrances received only evasive returns, till the spirit of the British government, in asserting the right of search, and detaining several vessels, which were found in the act of serving our enemies with warlike stores, produced a partial suspension of the illicit trade. When the right of search came to be more rigorously enforced on our side, the Dutch, in their turn, became complainants, and seemed prepared to maintain by violence the hostility which they had hitherto practised under the cloak of neutrality. Their traders put themselves under protection of an armed squadron in the Mediterranean, commanded by Count Byland. A British fleet, under Commodore Fielding, having sailed

CHAP.
XV.

1780.

Jan. 3.

from the Channel, for the pursuit of these traders, the boats of the English commander, which attempted a search, were fired on by the Dutch. On this Commodore Fielding fired a shot across the way of the Dutch admiral, which was answered by a broadside from Byland's flag-ship. The British commander did not fail to return the salute, but Byland struck his colours. In the meantime, the greater part of his convoy fled for the coast of France. The remainder, along with Count Byland's ship, were brought home to Spithead.

After an affair so nearly tending to open war, the British court were determined to bring the states of Holland to a decisive test of their intentions with regard to their future conduct. By a treaty of the last century, which had never been formally disavowed, the two countries were respectively bound to succour each other, in the event of either being involved in war. After Spain had joined the confederacy against us, the states had been reminded of this engagement, but no satisfactory answer was received. The British resident at the Hague, after Byland's affair, presented another memorial, declaring, that the refusal or evasion of a proper answer would be regarded as annulling the long acknowledged alliance. Satisfaction being still withheld, the Dutch were, by an edict of the British government, declared unconnected with us by treaty, and entitled to no privileges beyond those of other nations in a state of neutrality.

The rupture of this nominal alliance with Holland was contemporary with another important event, which forms an era in the history of European confederacies, and strongly marks the state of solitary embarrassment through which the country was struggling during the last years of this calamitous war. Throughout Europe there was not, at

the present period, a single power of the first or second rank, in which the influence of the cabinet, or the tide of popular opinion, or the interests of national aggrandizement, were connected with partiality to Britain. The writings and the personal exertions of Frederick II displayed all the hatred of an enemy, though couched under the pretence of impartial philosophy and philanthropy. His influence at the northern courts was directed to rouse the jealousy of the maritime powers against our alleged tyranny over the seas. By flattering the ambition of Catherine II, with the merit of being protectress of the invaded rights of neutral nations, and with the vanity of giving the world a new code of maritime legislation, his advice had no small influence in maturing the important plan of the armed neutrality of the north. The basis of this northern treaty was, that neutral powers, unconcerned in the war, should be permitted to carry on their commerce in the same unlimited manner as in time of peace, contraband goods alone excepted; but of what should constitute contraband goods, these the armed neutral powers themselves were to be judges: and this principle was to be maintained by force, if any forcible resistance should be offered to it.

The plan of the armed neutrality, so warmly patronized by Prussia, was said to have originated with the king of Sweden. Russia was the leading power, who announced it to Europe. The northern powers found their pride and advantage thus promoted, by being enabled to preserve their commerce unrestrained, of which no inconsiderable share arose from the very existence of the war, and the demand that arose for naval and military stores to the enemies of Britain. By absolving neutral vessels from search, the freedom of trade was indeed maintained; but if this was

CHAP.
XVI

1780.

trality, it brings the term to express a meaning different from all former interpretations. To an insular power, such as England, whose sole ability to contend with two mighty kingdoms, such as France and Spain, consists in the power of her navy, the cutting off the resources of those unequal enemies by sea is the sole or chief spring of her advantage; and, if an armament of other nations cut asunder this main sinew of her strength, the act, whether justice to themselves or injustice to us, cannot be called neutrality. Even when exercised to its utmost extent, the right of search, it is well known, does but partially prevent the infusion of strength and nourishment, for the purposes of war, into hostile countries, through the medium of neutral trade; but if free ships are to constitute free trade, there is an end of the naval advantages of our maritime empire. Divested, therefore, of metaphysical disquisition, the effect comes practically to Great Britain as an act of hostile interference. If her power be insufficient to maintain the right of search, she must resign it; but, as long as her strength remains unbroken, the invincible arms of her brave seamen, it is to be hoped, will cut the question short by the decisive argument of force.

The declaration of Russia, announcing this hostile treaty, was received with becoming dignity on the part of Britain; but it was impossible, under such circumstances as the present, to resent the insult, as it merited. From Russia the avowal came peculiarly invidious; a power which owed its naval eminence so much and so recently to the generous aid and encouragement of this country. The hostile powers extolled it as an eminent era in the assertion of human rights. Among its panegyrists on the sublime principles of justice, was the philosophical monarch of Prussia, who had so lately satiated his own im-

maculate ambition by the plunder of an unoffensive CHAP.
XXVI

Poland, chained by thousands, in waggon loads, to live, by compulsion, under the blessings of his government. 1780.

The intentions of Holland, though long suspected, had neither been avowed nor fully discovered, till an accidental circumstance put an end to their insidious neutrality. A congress packet being captured off Newfoundland, was found to contain some papers, which, at first, were thrown overboard, but were rescued from the waves by the intrepidity of an English seaman. By these papers it was proved, that a passenger in the captured vessel was the bearer of a treaty of amity, drawn up between the states of Holland and independent America. The passenger was Henry Laurens, late president of the congress, who was brought to London, and committed to the Tower. The stadtholder, along with that small declining party, who were the sole, but secret, friends of the English interests in the Dutch government, had tried their faint efforts, but in vain, at this period, to resist the tide of popular predeliction for the American cause. The greater part of the mercantile interest, as well as the aristocracy, and their leader, the pensionary Van Berkel, were attached by their intrigues to the court of France, and, by their hatred of Britain, to the cause of her colonies. The disclosure of Mr. Laurens's papers occasioned a memorial of the British ambassador at the Hague, to the states, requiring them to disavow the practices of Van Berkel, and bring them to punishment; with a threat that war should be declared, if this satisfaction were denied. On the refusal of our demand, letters of reprisal were issued against Holland on the 20th of December 1780.

During the present year, by the death of Sir

CHAP.
XVI.
—
1780.

Charles Hardy, the command of the Channel fleet had devolved, in the month of May, to Admiral Geary, who sailed in quest of the enemy with 30 ships of the line. During his cruise, in the month of July, he gave chase to a convoy of about thirty French merchantmen from the West Indies, and captured twelve. The rest escaped by favour of a fog, with the two armed ships which were their convoy.

The French and Spanish fleets, under Don Lewis Cordova, renewed their junction this year, which had spread such consternation during the last. They did not, however, attempt to enter the Channel; but cruized in that track through which the outward bound trade to the East and West Indies usually passes, and, from their numbers, covered an immense extent of sea. A most valuable convoy from the East and West Indies, under the conduct of Captain Moutray of the *Ramillies*, fell unfortunately into their hands. It included, besides the merchantmen, eighteen transports for the West-Indian service. Five East Indiamen, loaded with arms, ammunition, and stores, with fifty West Indiamen, fell a prey to the captors. The *Ramillies* herself, with a few frigates, had the fortune to escape. The prizes were conveyed to Cadiz, where a sight of triumph, unusual to the Spanish nation, was exhibited. Sixty English ships were brought captive by the squadron, whilst a groupe of prisoners, nearly 8000 in number, of all ages and denominations, soldiers, marines, seamen, and passengers, were led ashore in sight of the inhabitants. Among the female passengers were some beautiful women of rank. The multitude and the mixture of the prisoners, and the sight of such immense spoil, resembled rather the gathering of a sacked city, than of the capture of an ordinary fleet.

About the same time, accounts were received of

the loss of a great part of the valuable outward bound Quebec fleet, which was intercepted off the banks of Newfoundland by American privateers. Some of these vessels were retaken, but fourteen rich ships were irretrievably carried off.

The grand fleets of the hostile nations did not this year come in sight of each other; but several desperate actions of single ships evinced the accustomed superiority of our seamen. The siege and blockade of Gibraltar was continued, though the danger of famine by blockade had been averted by the arrival of Rodney; and all the other efforts of the Spaniards to reduce the place were effectually encountered by the vigilance of Elliot and the bravery of his garrison.

After the relief of Gibraltar, we have seen that Rodney proceeded, first to the coasts of Britain, and finally to his destination in the west. He arrived at St. Lucia on the 27th of March. His arrival brought the contending fleets nearer to an equality, but still the advantage of numbers lay on the side of the enemy. Two days before the arrival of Rodney, a very brilliant action was fought by the honourable Captain Cornwallis, with three British ships, one of 64, another of 50, and the third of only 44 guns. With this scanty force our countrymen drew up to receive the attack of four 74 gun ships and two frigates of the French, under Monsieur de la Motte Picquet. The battle raged from five in the evening till the succeeding morning, when both fleets drew off, by mutual consent, to repair. On the third day a British 64 came in sight; and with this force, though still inferior, Cornwallis bore down to renew the action: but the French squadron had been sufficiently satisfied with the past engagement, and, drawing off with the advantage of the wind, soon got out of sight.

CHAP.
XVI.

1780.

Shortly previous to Rodney's arrival, the French admiral Count de Guichen, with 25 ships of the line and a cloud of transports, appeared before St. Lucia, with an evident design of attempting the capture of that island; but the defence which appeared ready to meet him by land, and the judicious dispositions of Sir Hyde Parker, induced him to leave it, and proceed to Martinique. Sir George Rodney, after touching at St. Lucia, went in pursuit of him. The French admiral took shelter before Fort Royal, and could not be provoked to risk an engagement. In this station he remained till the 15th of April, when, after the departure of Rodney, he ventured to put to sea. Immediate intelligence being communicated to the British admiral, he sailed in pursuit of the enemy, with twenty ships of the line. On the 16th he came in sight of him; and, on the 17th, a partial action took place. The flag ship of Rodney, after beating three of the enemy's in succession out of the line, encountered the Count de Guichen's ship, supported by two others of the hostile fleet, and, in spite of this great disparity, forced them to flight. In this partial action, the loss of the French amounted to 1000 men. The British, in killed and wounded, counted only 470. The enemy bore away, completely repulsed; but no decisive advantage was gained by the engagement. From the 20th to the 24th of the same month, they were again closely pursued & their retreat to Martinique was also cut off, and they were forced, for disgraceful shelter, under the fortifications of Guadaloupe.

On the 15th and 19th of the following month, the eagerness of Rodney brought him again in sight of the enemy. On both of these days, two short, but still indecisive, skirmishes between the

van of his fleet and the rear of the flying enemy, once more disappointed the ardour of the British admiral by the flight of their antagonists, and favoured the resolution of De Guichen to avoid a general meeting.

CHAP.
XVI.
1780.

As the summer advanced, the power of the Spaniards, increased by reinforcements from home, grew formidable on the Transatlantic coast. The destination of a powerful body of land forces on board their fleet on this quarter was to invade our West-India possessions, in concert with M. de Guichen, the French admiral; and the junction of the fleets, in spite of all the efforts of Rodney, all the hard blows which he had given to the fleet of Guichen, was at last unfortunately effected. Our islands, however, were saved by the same cause which had enervated the power of the combined fleets in Europe on a late tremendous occasion, and disabled them from striking an effective blow. Contagious and deadly sickness broke out on board the Spanish ships and transports, from the cooped-up situation of the land forces in a long voyage, and the deadly heat of the climate, unrefreshed by care or cleanliness. Without effecting any thing correspondent to their strength or expectations, the allied fleets separated. The Spaniards proceeded to the Havannah, and De Guichen, after touching at St. Domingo, returned to Europe with a convoy.

Nothing could be more galling to the Americans than to hear of the departure of this commander, on whose assistance they had so sanguinely relied: Washington's army had been increased, in the hopes of his co-operation, to 20,000 men; the attack of New-York had been projected, and preparatory proclamations issued out by the Marquis of La Fayette.

CHAP.
XV.

1780.

Sept. 14.

Sir George Rodney, apprehensive of the enemy's designs upon the northern capital, heard of the separation of the fleets as an event of unexpected good fortune. Learning De Guichen's departure from Cape François, he immediately sailed, with eleven capital ships and four frigates, for the relief of New-York. Although he found, soon after his arrival, that his presence had not been indispensably required, yet he was saved, by this movement, from suffering in that dreadful hurricane, which, in the autumn of the present year, overwhelmed almost all the works of man and the productions of nature, in those unfortunate regions where it raged.

October.

This long-remembered hurricane began to blow on the island of Barbadoes on the morning of the 10th of October. It destroyed the capital of that island, and buried thousands of the inhabitants under the ruins of its track, or swept them into the sea. The islands of S^t. Lucia, Grenada, and S^t. Vincent, were likewise nearly laid waste. At S^t. Vincent, it was said that not a house was left standing. The ships in those seas were either driven on shore, or swallowed up in the waves. One ship of the British line went down in a single moment, and left not even a wreck behind. In Jamaica, the course of the hurricane came across part of the island, and produced a dreadful scene of destruction. While the unhappy inhabitants of Savannah-la-Mar, in Westmorland parish of that island, were gazing with astonishment at such a swell of the sea as never had been seen before, a sudden sweep of its waters overwhelmed the town, and left no trace of living being or habitation behind it.

In consequence of the heavy calamities arising to individuals from these convulsions of nature, more particularly in Jamaica and Barbadoes, seve-

ral petitions were presented by the sufferers to parliament, which were humanely considered by the house ; and, at the opening of the next year, a grant of £80,000 was made, on the motion of Lord North, for their relief, and passed without debate or opposition.


CHAP.

XVI.

1780.

CHAP. XVII.

Meeting, and proceedings of the new parliament . . . Debates on the choice of a speaker . . . on the address . . . on the war with Holland . . . on the conduct of Lord Sandwich . . . on the proposed plans of reform . . . on Indian affairs . . . on the terms of the loan . . . on the neglected state of the police, and military interference in the late riots . . . on Mr. Fox's motion for peace with America . . . Outline of the war in India . . . Attempt of the French on the island of Jersey . . . Blockade and sally of the garrison at Gibraltar . . . Junction of the grand fleets of France and Spain in the British Channel . . . Expedition of Kempenfeldt . . . Action off the Dogger-bank . . . Naval expedition of Commodore Johnson . . . Capture of St. Eustatia, and other Dutch settlements . . . Indecisive hostilities of the French and English fleets in the West Indies . . . Attempt of the French on St. Lucia . . . Tobago captured by the marquis de Bouillé . . . State of affairs in America . . . Mutiny in the American army . . . Ravages of Arnold in Virginia . . . War in Carolina . . . Battle of Guildford . . . Retreat of Cornwallis to Wilmington, and afterwards into Virginia . . . Action of Lord Rawdon with the provincials at Hobkirk's-hill . . . Progress of General Greene . . . Retreat of Lord Rawdon to Charlestown . . . Battle of Eutaw Springs . . . Views of Washington and the count de Rochambeau on New-York . . . Stratagem of the allies to delude Clinton . . . Washington's march into Virginia . . . Junction with La Fayette . . . Retreat of Cornwallis within the works of Yorktown . . . Siege of Yorktown, and surrender of the British army . . . Capture of St. Christophers, and other settlements, by the French.

 **O**n the meeting of the new parliament, the first trial of party strength was called out by the election of a speaker. Sir Fletcher Norton had, by

more than one display of his independent principles during the late political struggles, forfeited the favour of administration, and even for some time their common civility; but so respectable was the character of the speaker, that, with all their earnest wishes to depose him, the attempt could not be made without the feigned ceremonies of regard. In consideration of Sir Fletcher's delicate health, the court members proposed that he should be exonerated from the heavy duties of his station, and a new speaker, Mr. Cornwall, was proposed. Sir Fletcher Norton declared that his health was perfectly adequate to the discharge of his duty, and treated their hypocritical concern for it with ridicule. He declined, however, standing a candidate for the chair, and requested his friends not to urge his election. Mr. Cornwall was chosen; and ministers, to crown their inconsistency, in the very moment of deposing the late speaker, recommended to his successor to copy his example.

His majesty, in the opening speech, deplored the continuance of rebellion in America, and the hostile interference of the ambitious houses of Bourbon. The successes of our arms in Georgia and Carolina were, however, exhibited as encouragements to keep alive the exertions of the country. On the loyal sentiments of the people; and on the zeal of his faithful legislature, his majesty expressed his trust, that the supplies would be sufficient for every call. The address in the commons was moved by Mr. de Grey, and seconded by Mr. R. Sutton. After a due compliment to the sovereign, on the accession of another prince to his illustrious family, the addressers seconded the views of his majesty, and promised an ample support to the war. An amendment, for expunging those congratulatory passages (except what regarded the birth of the royal infant), and omitting those pas-

CHAP.
XVII.

1780.

sages which pledged the house to the support of the present measures respecting the war, was proposed by Mr. Grenville, and seconded by Colonel Fitzpatrick; but the strength of parties had been already brought to an issue, and the rejection of this amendment was naturally expected. Though the strength of administration in the new parliament was thus evinced, the spirit of resistance to the war was not abated on the side of opposition. The occasion, however, though it evinced the strength of ministers in the new parliament, gave room for a copious renewal of all the reasoning that had been ever urged in defence or accusation of the war. It was asked, if his majesty's speech had exhibited a single hope to the country, of this dreadful contest being brought to a speedy issue, or the principles being abandoned which had led to its protraction? It was alleged indeed, that our affairs had brightened in America; but was not this the language of ministers at the opening of every session; and what had been gained by victories much more splendid than that of the last campaign? only the addition of heavier burthens to the country, and the prospect of interminable hostilities. Mr. Fox, in the course of his animadversions on the address, observed, that it recognized the blessings of his majesty's reign. With those blessings he declared he was unacquainted. The present reign had been a continued tissue of disgrace, mismanagement, and calamity. The defence of administration rested chiefly on two points, the necessity of holding such language to the crown as should impress on the minds of Europe a conviction, that our strength and spirit were still capable of coping with our enemies—that our weakness, even if we were conscious of it, ought to be concealed, since the union of hostile nations, allied by no permanent community of interests, would thus

be likely to yield to the single unbroken spirit of our country. The war in America, it was declared by the same speakers, was now conducted, not so much from the certainty as from the hope of subduing America; but that hope they described as neither distant nor likely to be delusive. It was not doubted that one half of the colonists were our friends, and needed only to be freed from their oppressors to devote themselves again to our standard, and annihilate the government of usurpation. To such language the few successes of the late campaign led the abettors of the war. It seems a modest calculation, considering the usual estimates of that administration, to count on no more than one half of the colonial population to have been our friends—though it is no less strange that men could yet gravely announce the probability of subduing a wide continent, of three millions of people, at the distance of half the globe, on the granted supposition that every second man in America was our foe. But with such views, and with such facts before them, the new parliament pledged themselves to support ministers in the contest. Their first majority was 212, against 130. Little business of importance was brought on before the Christmas recess.

On the meeting after adjournment, his majesty's speech, announcing the declaration of hostilities with Holland, occasioned a severe examination of the progress of our quarrel with that ancient ally. The intercepted treaty of the city of Amsterdam with the American states, was laid before the house. It had been declared in the British manifesto to be a treaty concluded. It was asserted by the antagonists of ministers to be only the plan of a treaty, depending for its completion on the emancipation of America, an event which might never be fulfilled. It was urged also by the same speak-

CHAP.
XVII.

1781

ers, that in asking the Dutch to fulfil the ancient treaty of mutual defence and protection, we had made a demand, which even to ourselves would have proved ruinous in the fulfilment. We should have dragged that republic into a war with France, and exposed her to invasion. Our stipulated aid from the states would have been 20 ships of war, and 6000 men. On our side, we were bound, however, to protect her from invasion, and a continental war would have thus ensued, to which the aid of Holland would have furnished but a scanty supply. It was therefore the interest of Great Britain, they contended, to leave Holland in a state of neutrality, instead of wantonly adding her either to the number of our enemies, or of allies whom we could not protect. It was proved, in addition to these charges against the conduct of ministers towards Holland, that the states had offered to disavow the treaty of Amsterdam with America, although the proof only established their willingness to make that concession in *'general terms.'*

In this debate, the preponderance of votes went, as usual, with ministers. If we consider the main fact, that Holland had, during six years of the war, continued to supply the revolted colonists with all the implements and resources of war; that the ruling faction in their divided commonwealth openly espoused the cause of America, and that no power or party existed in the state, who could suppress the illicit trade which the laws of war pronounced to be absolute hostility, we shall consider the true interests of Britain to have been war with Holland, a war sanctioned by justice and policy. If a trade so fatal to Britain had not been stopped, by many years of negotiation, there was little hope that it should be now discontinued by the protraction of remonstrance and reply.

Mr. Fox, with unremitting ardour, renewed his

attacks on the most corrupt and obnoxious part of administration, the head of the admiralty. On the 1st of February, in consequence of a previous notice, he moved for a vote of censure on the conduct of Lord Sandwich, for appointing Sir Hugh Palliser to be governor of Greenwich hospital, after he had been declared by a court-martial to have been guilty of an ill-founded and malicious accusation against his superior officer. This appointment Mr. Fox declared to be subversive of all discipline in the navy, and derogatory to its honour, since it marked but the promoters of calumny and disturbance, not as objects of punishment, but of trust, distinction, and reward. Ministers declared, in defence of Lord Sandwich, that Palliser's promotion to the government of Greenwich hospital was not his lordship's act individually, but the joint appointment of his majesty's cabinet. By the just merits of that appointment they said they were willing to abide. The judgment of the court-martial who had condemned the motives of Palliser on his commander's trial, they asserted to have been injurious, without the support of proof, and exceeding the bounds of their jurisdiction. An amendment, destructive of Mr. Fox's motion, was then proposed, and carried by a large majority.

Mr. Burke's financial plan of reform, soon after engrossed the attention of the house of commons. As the bill was unchanged since the preceding year, it necessarily occasioned the same train of discussion as in the preceding session. The principal debate took place on the day appointed for the second reading of the bill, and on the particular subject of regulating his majesty's civil establishment, of limiting pensions, and suppressing unnecessary places. If the subject of this debate wanted the interest of novelty, that circumstance was at least compensated by the addition of a new champion to

CHAP.
XVII.
1781.

CHAP.
XVII

1781.

1 eb. 26.

the cause of reform, whose appearance in parliament excited no common sensation. This was the son of Chatham, William Pitt, already known by the academical fame of his younger years, to inherit the distinguished talents of his father, but yet untried on the great theatre of public debate, where he was doomed so long after to be conspicuous. He had been returned member for Poole, and made his first appearance on the side of opposition. When he rose to speak, the remembrance of Chatham, and the general anticipation of his celebrity, occasioned an extraordinary silence in the house, *conticuere omnes intentique ora tenebant*. His maiden speech was such as, in matter and manner, to justify the highest hopes of his father's admirers. His genius came forward at one display, in confirmed and majestic maturity. The greatest statesman of the house, whose praise might be called fame, pronounced his eulogium on that day, and predicted that his future fame and influence would for ever be of the first magnitude. Earl Nugent, and Mr. Henry Dundas, were the chief speakers who opposed the proposal of reform. They succeeded in rejecting Mr. Burke's bill, or what was adequate to that effect, in postponing the consideration of it for six months. The numbers of opposition continued to increase; they produced on this occasion 190 votes against 233. Two bills of reform, under different titles, but similar to Mr. Burke's in their object, of diminishing the court influence, and another by Sir Philip Jennings Clarke, for excluding contractors with government from a seat in the house; and a fourth, for restraining revenue officers from voting at elections, experienced a similar rejection.

The discussion of Indian affairs became a prominent proceeding in this session, from the imperious

necessity of relieving the many hardships, and redressing the loud complaints which the distracted state of those territories had occasioned. As early as the year 1772, the known misconduct of the company's servants had called for the interference of government; and restraints were laid on the monopoly of the company, which have been since followed by successive encroachments on their power. In 1773, an act was passed for establishing certain rules and orders for the future management of the East-India company, as well in India as in Europe. By these regulations, Bengal was made the seat of the British government in the east; and two supreme authorities, the one possessing all political power, under the governor-general and council, the other composed of judges sent from England, to exercise an independent right of judicature, were established. Two powers so absolute and independent, however distinct their functions might be, on an early trial were found to combine all the evils of anarchy, as well as of despotism.

The sudden influence of the judicial court was to introduce among a people, the least fitted in the world for such a change of jurisprudence, the substitution of British for a Gentoo code of laws in India. To the natives of that empire, whose laws and habits have existed in their present shape, for ages before the name of Britain was heard of in the world, such a revolution in jurisprudence was revolting in the highest degree. They could bear conquest, but not change. The application of our sanguinary penal code to those pacific subjects, was not merely offensive, it was outrageous and inhuman. In Hindostan, for instance, forgery was regarded as a venal crime, and commutable by an easy fine; yet Nundcomar, a native nobleman, of high cast and elevated rank, was tried, convicted,

CHAP.
XVII.

1781.

and executed on an English statute, with which it is not probable that he could be acquainted, at the time of his committing the offence. One of his judges, Sir Robert Chambers, had the grace to express some scruples on the justice of taking a human life in a case so doubtful; but the influence of Sir Elijah Impey, who sat as chief judge on the trial, prevailed against the suggestions of mercy; and Nundcomar, to the horror of all India, suffered death on the gallows.

In defiance of the act itself for regulating India, the supreme court over-ruled the native courts established in the provinces. In the court of Dacca, at the suit of a low English attorney, Jaggernaut, a principal officer in the court, was dragged from his judgment-seat by a sheriffs officer. A riot ensued, and the consequence of the outrage was an entire cessation of the administration of justice throughout a populous province. Attempts were made, in similar practices of innovation, to arrest the zemindars, or feudal chiefs of the provinces; on which occasions, the lowest officers of the court violated the retreats of the female sex, and the temples of Indian worship. It seemed now time for the supreme council to interfere, to prevent universal confusion and outrage; and, with the aid of the military, some of the wanton perpetrators of these acts were committed to prison. Sir Elijah Impey, however, obstinately adhering to his trust of judicial revolution, sent orders to resist the military who had arrested the sheriffs officers, by orders of the council. To such a state had the institutions of North and his colleagues, and the conduct of the English judges, reduced our possessions in India.

On the 4th of December 1780, a petition was presented to the house of commons, from the British inhabitants of Bengal and Orissa, complaining

of the indiscriminate and injudicious manner in which the judges of the supreme court endeavoured to administer the English laws in those provinces. This remonstrance was seconded by another memorial of the governor-general and council, describing the recent transactions, and requesting indemnity from the legal consequences of their resistance to the judicatorial power; a resistance to which they had been driven by the necessity of preserving the country from ruin and rebellion. On the motion of General Smith, these petitions were referred to a select committee. The minister did not seem averse to remedy the evils of his Indian institutions, but apologized, by saying that he was far from expecting such effects to result from a court of judicature, as should render it a source of oppression. . In the course of the session, a bill, complying with the general tenor of the petitions, and founded on the report of the committee, was introduced and passed, for regulating the administration of justice in India, and for indemnifying the governor and council for their wholesome interference. By this bill, the authority of the supreme court was limited; the governor and council of Bengal were exempted from its jurisdiction; the zemindars, as well as the country courts, were also secured from its usurpations. .

CHAP.
XVII.

1782.

Feb. 12.

Of the enormous exigencies of the year, amounting to twenty-one millions, twelve millions were to be raised by loan, on terms so advantageous to the lenders, that no less than 9 per cent. was allowed to the subscribers, even though the money was to be advanced by instalments. On the 7th of March, and on several days of subsequent debate on the motion of finance, Mr. Fox, and the leaders of opposition, exposed the terms of the loan to be a wanton and corrupt profusion of the public money. The profits might be calculated at a million of

CHAP.
XVII.

1781.

money—of money which went, not as a necessary purchase of public credit, but as bribes and douceurs to the dependents and upholders of ministry. The distribution of the loan was shewn to have been scandalously partial. By repeated motions, the minister was urged to produce a list of subscribers, and of those who had offered to subscribe. It was proved from these, that the minister might have borrowed thirty-eight millions, at 5 per cent. from men of unexceptionable credit. Why was this offer refused, but because the creatures of administration must be preferred, on terms disadvantageous to the country?

In the house of Lords, the loan was treated with equal severity by the marquis of Rockingham, who declared it to be an usurious contract, made by the minister, for the sole purpose of attaching his wavering adherents, by sharing in the gains. The marquis then contrasted its terms with those of former loans, particularly those of the duke of Newcastle's administration; the profits of which he stated, from authentic documents, to have been only $1\frac{1}{4}$ per cent., and in succeeding years, no more than $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. although twelve millions per annum were raised. The loan bill did not pass without a still severer exposure, on the day of Sir George Saville's motion for a committee to inquire into the subject. His second in the motion, Mr. Byng, whose diligence in collecting information did him the highest honour, produced a list of subscribers to former loans, who had been losers by their engagements, but who had been rejected in their applications to share in the present loan. It was shewn that a considerable part of the loan had been subscribed under fictitious names; that the clerks of bankers were entered on the list, while the money was in reality for members of parliament. In spite of these, and other facts of similar

atrocities, the motion fell by the weight of that venality which it had for its object to expose.

CHAP. XVII.
1781.

If ministers had gained by the late election, in numerical strength of adherents, the power of the opposition was certainly increased, during this session, by some of the greatest acceptions which the genius of the country could afford. Beside the name of Pitt, that of Sheridan is for the first time recorded in the parliamentary annals of this year. His reputation was already established in literature, but his eloquence in the house soon eclipsed, if possible, the brilliant popularity of his writings. Among the earliest occasions that drew forth his powers, were his three motions respecting the late riots in London; the first, for declaring that the military ought not to be applied in quelling tumultuous assemblies, till their violence was beyond the reach of the civil power to subdue; the other was, to pass a censure on the inadequate state of the police in Westminster, as evinced by the events of the 7th of June; and the third, for a committee to examine and report on these defects. The main scope of his reasoning was, to establish the criminality of government, in leaving the country defenceless of police, and obnoxious to such disturbances as could not be quelled by the arm of the civil power; as well as to deprecate the arbitrary doctrines which had been promulged on the general propriety of military interference; doctrines, which, he contended, might lead, on future occasions, to establish a precedent for dragooning, even when the danger bore no such aspect as the late alarming events. The conduct of government was justified, by a vote of the house, against two of Sheridan's motions; the other motion was withdrawn.

In the course of the session, while the select

* * Most particularly imputed to Lord Mansfield.

CHAP.
XVII.

1782.

committee were still sitting, intelligence was communicated to the house, of events in the East-Indies; which we shall have shortly occasion to notice; of the war in the Carnatic, and the ravages of Hyder Ally, so alarming as to induce the minister to provide for an inquiry into their causes. But, to divest that inquiry of any publicity which might expose him to the censures of opposition, Lord North moved, that the subject should be referred to a secret committee. Fox, seconded by Burke, in vain endeavoured to over-rule the proposal of secrecy; and the original motion being carried, the event of the ballot in choosing a committee, was such as might have been anticipated. A majority, of at least four to one, were ministerial members. The secret committee were authorized to sit in the India-house, to adjourn from place to place, and from time to time, and to pursue their inquiries, to the great comfort of ministers, during the recess of parliament.

Under these circumstances, the negotiation of government with the East-India directors, for the renewal of their charter, had not come to a conclusion, but exhibited a spirit of continued obstinacy on either side. Towards the end of the session, however, the minister brought the business before parliament, in a shape so formidable to the company, as to make any conditions seem at last to be preferable to a farther dispute. He proposed, as a question for the consideration of the commons; whether it should be proper for the crown to take the territorial possessions of India into its own hand, or to leave them to the company? whether the trade should be thrown open, or continued under the monopoly of a different company? or, if the present company were continued, whether it would not be proper to grant a large participation to government of their profits and revenues?

He proposed a tribunal for trying Indian delinquents, and demanded of the company £600,000, as a debt legalized by a resolution of the commons in 1778.

CHAP.
XVII.
1782.

To oppose the utmost extent of this demand, and to deprecate the proposal of throwing open the East Indian trade, the company were not without supporters in the house of commons, independent of the aid of those members of opposition, whose opinions, or love of popularity, might lead them to espouse their cause. The unfavourable news from India contributed also to stint the demand expected as the premium for the charter. The negotiation with government was successfully renewed, the demand of £632,000 reduced to £402,000, and the monopoly authorized to continue till 1794.

No events could be conceived more inauspicious to the true interests of reform, than the late tumults in the capital, induced by popular assemblies. The advocates of that reformation, however, which had objects in view very different from the protestant association; objects which were patronized by Richmond, by Saville, and by Pitt, were not discouraged either by the false imputation of disloyal principles, or by the arguments which were strenuously drawn from the late disturbances, to shew the danger of increasing popular influence. In the most opulent and populous counties, delegates were chosen for prosecuting the object of parliamentary reform, and delivering petitions to the legislature. These assembled in London, to the number of between 30 and 40; and, acting collectively for their constituents, prepared a new petition to the house of commons, on the 3^d of May. It was proposed by Mr. Duncombe and Sir George Saville, to refer the petitions to a committee

CHAP.
XVII.

of the whole house; but the commitment was rejected by a large majority.

The events in America, which we shall have immediate occasion to notice, now revealed, at the close of the session, a far different scene from the aspect of our affairs which the royal speech had announced at its opening. The account of the battle of Guildford had been gazetted, by which it appeared that the army of Cornwallis, ruined even by its own victories, had been obliged to abandon all its hard-won contests, and retire to the sea side. Mr. Fox felt that the intelligence authorized him to move, on the 12th of June, for a vote of the house, to recommend to his majesty's ministers every possible measure for restoring peace with America. In this debate, both the mover, and the speakers on either side, drew a copious picture of the hopes and fears, the chances and the obstacles of recovering America. The expediency and the evils of yielding so mighty a portion of the empire were oppositely and strongly argued; the very right and legality of cession was discussed. At midnight, a majority of 172 to 99 rejected Mr. Fox's proposal.

In this debate, the eloquence of Pitt was for a second time in the session very forcibly distinguished. He intrenched with great energy against the unnatural, unhallowed, and accursed principles of the war, which he pronounced to contain every characteristic of human depravity, and to portend every human mischief to the wretched people who had engendered it. A war which drew the blood, the sustenance from the vitals of the country; which brought victories and defeats alike to be deplored; which filled the land with sorrow for our own devoted countrymen, slain in the cause of injustice, or recorded the struggles of their opponents, bleeding in the holy defence of their liberty. The

session was terminated by a speech from the throne, on the 18th of July; and for the first time the royal address seemed to speak, though indistinctly, of peace.

CHAP.
XVII.
1781.

The martial transactions of the kingdom were, during these domestic discussions, of great number and importance.

As early as the close of the last year (1780), the East-India company having received undoubted intelligence of the peace concluded between Hyder Ally and the formidable empire of the Marattas, concerted measures, along with the nabob of Arcot, for the preservation of the Carnatic. In the July of the following year, their fears were realized by the bold invasion of that warlike prince, who, being joined by the troops of Count Lally, and a number of French officers, made his way through the Gauts, and burst like a torrent into the country of the Carnatic, ravaging the territory on all sides, and finally reaching to the neighbourhood of Madras, laid siege to Arcot. General Sir Hector Munro, marching from the mount near Madras, and forming a junction with Colonel Baillie, obliged the native chief to raise the siege. Baillie afterwards met and defeated a detachment of the native army, under Meer Saib, with a disparity of numbers highly creditable to the victors; but Hyder's immense army lying in his way, he was unable, after the victory, to pursue his march. Colonel Fletcher being sent with a chosen detachment to support him, a desperate action took place between the Indian army and our united detachments. In spite of their great disparity, a severe resistance was made by the British; and it was only the accidental blowing up of a magazine that decided the day. The moment of advantage was suddenly caught by the son of Hyder, the since celebrated Tippoo Saib, who forced his way, at the

Aug 29.

CHAP.
XVII.

1784.

head of his cavalry, into the broken square of the British and sepoy. The sepoy, from their number, being most distinguished and exposed, suffered the most severely, their loss in killed and wounded amounting, by common statement, to 1000 men. Of the European troops about 600 fell.³ Colonel Fletcher was among the killed, and Baillie, severely wounded, was taken, with a handful of European prisoners, who were afterwards consigned, for years, to the dungeons of Hyder Ally. General Hector Munro, after this disaster, drew back his troops to Madras; while Hyder renewed the siege of Arcot, and took both city and fortress. Vigorous measures were now adopted by the supreme council for the relief of the Carnatic; and Sir Eyre Coote arriving from Bengal with a large supply of money and reinforcements, was appointed to the command of the army in the Carnatic.

Hyder's army, when Sir Eyre Coote first took the field to meet him, was exceedingly augmented. His forces within the Carnatic itself were computed at no less than 100,000 men, and his matchlockmen and infantry at 80,000. Sir Eyre's force did not exceed 7000. The relief of the besieged places was his first and principal object; and as the fortress of Wandewash was in most immediate danger, he marched instantly to its relief, and Hyder, with all his numbers, was pleased to abandon the siege. The besieged places in the Carnatic were now generally relieved by the progress of the British arms; and at Pondicherry, where alarms had arisen, from the perfidy of the French, who were left there on the faith of a capitulating treaty, every danger was extinguished by the general's disarming the inhabitants, removing their magazines, and destroying their boats. In the mean-

³ The scene of action was called Perimpaneum.

time, Sir Edward Hughes performed an important service on the Malabar coast, and destroyed Hyder's own shipping in the ports of Calicut and Mangalore. Hyder's views appearing soon after to be addressed to a place of considerable strength in the upper part of the Carnatic, Trichinapoly, Sir Eyre marched to oppose him; and meeting the grand host of Hyder, after a few hours march from the British camp at Porto Novo, gave him battle. The day of that engagement (July 1, 1781) may be well regarded as one of the most remarkable in Indian history. With scarce 2000 Europeans and a regiment of sepoys, he engaged this enormous multitude of men, as we are told, naturally brave, and to the number of 70,000, regularly disciplined; but of bravery or discipline that is beat on such unfair terms, what notions are we to form? Hyder was completely routed, and his artillery only saved by the abundance and strength of his draught cattle. The English army, on Hyder's retreat, marching to the northward, insured themselves against a reverse of fortune by joining with the detached forces from Bengal. The Indian chief was again defeated, near the very spot where he had, early in the campaign, defeated Colonel Baillie. On the 17th of September, he was a third time attacked, and driven before the British arms, at a place called Sholingur; an event which seemed to decide his fate for the rest of the campaign. Our land and sea forces, in the meantime, had united themselves under Admiral Hughes and General Munro, for the siege of Negapatam, a town on the sea-coast, which surrendered to their arms on moderate conditions. The admiral then proceeded against the island of Ceylon and the Dutch settlements of Trincomalee.

One ineffectual attempt on the island of Jersey, which has been already related, did not discourage

CHAP.
XVIII.

1781.

Jan. 6.

the French from making another. After a disastrous voyage from the coast of France, the Baron de Rulécourt landed his troops in the night, seized upon a small advanced guard, which, with shameful remissness, was found asleep at their post, upon a redoubt near Violet bank, and, getting up rapidly to St. Helier, the capital, had the principal streets, the market-place, the deputy-governor, and the magistrates, in his possession, before the slightest alarm could be given. Having the lieutenant-governor, Major Corbet, thus in his hands, he prevailed upon him, by extravagant descriptions of his own forces, and by threats of destroying the town, to sign a capitulation, and summoned its chief place of strength, Elizabeth-castle, to surrender; but the officers next in command to Corbet, who had fortunately escaped being made prisoners, refused to abide by any surrender that was extorted from their superior, in the hands of his enemies. The militia and troops of the island advanced, under Major Pierson, to drive the French out of St. Heliers, which they succeeded in effecting, although with the much-regretted circumstance of losing their brave commander, an officer of high reputation and promise, being only twenty-five years of age at the time when he expired, upon the eve of a victory obtained, in a great measure, by his own skillful arrangement. The Baron de Rulécourt, a man of violent passions, and by no means distinguished for honourable conduct during this invasion, had the mortification to see the destruction of his most sanguine wishes, just as his eyes were closed, by four mortal wounds, in the market-place; and his troops surrendered prisoners at discretion.

As early as the first commencement of hostilities, the views of Spain were fixed upon recovering Gibraltar. The last relief that had been afforded

to that garrison was by Rodney's fleet, in the beginning of the preceding year. Their provisions were, therefore, both scanty and spoiled with keeping. As they were cut off from supplies of the Barbary shore,⁴ their ancient market for supplies, they endured a most distressing privation of the most common necessities of life. When their situation was known in England, twenty-eight sail of the line, under Admiral Darby, were dispatched with a convoy, for relieving them, as well as to keep at bay the threatened descent of the Spaniards. After sending in the convoy to Gibraltar, and some large ships to cover them, Admiral Darby watched, off the mouth of the straits, the motions of the Spanish fleet, which had sailed into Cadiz, from unwillingness to risk an engagement. In the meantime, the gun-boats of the enemy in Algeziras bay came out to cannonade the shipping, as a prelude to the general attack of the fortress, which was soon to take place. In a week after the relieving fleet was moored, the bombardment of the town took place, and immediately the whole bay and rock, by the discharges on each side, was covered with fire. It was computed that the enemy must have expended daily, during three weeks from the first attack, more than 1000 barrels of gunpowder, of 100 pounds weight each, and from 400 to 500 shots and shells. The cannonade endured for several months, but, after the first few weeks, at a much reduced scale, as no powers of supply could support so great an expenditure.

⁴ The alienation of the Moorish emperor from our interests was a disadvantage in the blockade of Gibraltar, which we suffered entirely from the culpable negligence of ministers. General Elliot had, long before this period, communicated an offer of the Moors to

reject the proffered friendship of Spain, and supply our garrison, if only the naval stores for three vessels should be given, to protect his coast from the vengeance of the Spaniards, the value £1500. This offer was neglected, and he adopted the interests of our enemies.

CHAP
XVII.

1781.

General Elliot returned from the garrison; for some time, a most effective and tremendous fire. His loss, during the severest of the bombardment, was not correspondent to the magnitude of the siege, as the whole, from the 12th of April to the end of June, amounted only to one commissioned officer and fifty-two private men killed, and to seven officers and 253 others wounded. The horrors of these hostilities fell more severely on the inhabitants. Many were buried under the ruins of their own houses, or torn to pieces by the shells that burst in thousands on every side. The vaults and casemates, which could alone afford security, were filled by the garrison; and happy did the individuals, whose influence could procure admission to those shelters, account themselves, if they were allowed a few hours repose, amidst all the noise of a crowded soldiery, and the groans of the wounded, who were brought in from the works.

To save himself the necessity of incessant firing, Elliot executed a bold and fortunate enterprize. He ordered the grenadiers and light infantry of the garrison, together with the 12th regiment, and the German regiment called Hardenberg's, to assemble on the sands at midnight, and assail those stupendous works of the Spaniards, which had cost so much labour and expence. Two thousand and fourteen soldiers and 300 sailors effected this service with undaunted courage. Having proceeded, in deep and deliberate silence, till the enemy's sentries, seeing them face to face, fired and gave the alarm, they instantly rushed in upon the Spaniards, who fled in every direction. Ten thirteen-inch mortars and eighteen twenty-six-pounders were spiked by the gallant band in this sortie. The Spaniards were so panic-struck, that they made no attempt to save them; but left the victors, with their own

coolness and dispatch, to lay the trains for their magazines, which, immediately after the retreat of our men, blew up with tremendous explosions.

CHAP.
XVII.

1781.
Nov. 27.

Admiral Darby, having in vain endeavoured to draw the Spanish fleet to an engagement, after relieving Gibraltar, returned to protect the English Channel; while De Guichen, having no enemy to intercept him between Brest and Cadiz, joined the Spaniards, at the latter harbour, with eighteen ships of the line, to support the intended invasion of Minorca. The combined fleets, after landing on that island a force of 10,000 men, soon returned to the west, and appearing in the English channel with forty-nine ships of the line, threatened at once the interception of our western commerce, and even the destruction of the British marine. By the timely information of a neutral vessel, Admiral Darby avoided so fatal a meeting; he repaired, with his fleet of twenty-one ships, into Torbay, where his force was afterwards augmented by ten ships of the line. With this fleet, still inadequate to risk a close engagement, he was ordered to put to sea, for the protection of the outward bound trade, but was cautioned not to give battle to the allies unless compelled by necessity, or to save our merchantmen. While he lay in the harbour of Torbay, before his succours could join him, the numbers of the allies inspired De Guichen with sufficient confidence to propose an attack on our fleet. He was seconded in his plan by the third in command on board the Spanish fleet; but the commander in chief of that nation shewing the impossibility of bearing down, with collected numbers, on their antagonists in port, and the danger of an attack with ships sailing singly to the attack, over-ruled the proposal. The views of the hostile fleet were now confined to the capture of merchantmen; an object which the vigilance of Darby, as soon as he

July.

CHAP.
XVII.

1781.

September.

began his cruise upon the coast, sufficiently prevented: and the mighty armament of France and Spain, which had lately covered the Channel, from Ushant to the Scilly islands, reduced by the sickness of their crews, and baffled by the boldness of British seamen, returned, divided, for their own respective coasts. Darby came back to Plymouth in November, after safely conducting our homeward bound fleet off the Atlantic.

After this partition of the grand fleets, though the season was now far advanced, yet the French had still hopes, by speedily refitting, to accomplish the reinforcement of their East and West-India fleets, and rejoin the Spaniards. Understanding this intention, and that a French squadron and convoy had put to sea, the admiralty dispatched Admiral Kempenfeldt with twelve ships of the line, a fifty-gun ship, and four frigates, to intercept them. On the 12th of December, the British commander fell in with the convoy, which, fortunately for the assailants, was parted for a time from the battle-ships by a severe gale. Though the frigates of Kempenfeldt were insufficient for a general pursuit, yet a dispersion of the convoy was accomplished, and twenty transports were captured, with 1,800 seamen and soldiers, and abundance of naval stores. The French admiral collected, with alacrity, all his force for an engagement, which was only averted that night, by darkness coming on. This circumstance was, to all appearance, a providential escape to Kempenfeldt; for, in the morning, the numbers of the enemy seemed so formidable, that the British admiral, though he had formed for battle, thought it prudent to draw off; and, as the French failed to pursue, no engagement took place. The reputation of Kempenfeldt was not tarnished by this event; but the conduct of the admiralty was severely arraigned for having or-

dered him to sea with a fleet so inadequate to the service.

CHAP.
XVII.

The war, though by this time fatal to Holland in other quarters, had not produced in Europe any decisive battle with that power. To watch their motions, and annoy their trade, in the north, Admiral Parker was dispatched from Portsmouth, with four ships of the line and one of fifty guns. His strength was increased by the fortunate junction of some other ships, after he had left Portsmouth, to six ships of the line, one 80, two 74's, one 64, one 60, one of 50 guns, and a frigate of 44, which the admiral was obliged, through necessity, to admit as a ship of the line. The Dutch admiral, Zoutman, with a valuable convoy for the north, had sailed from the Texel with eight ships of the line, from 74 to 54 guns, and ten frigates. He was joined by a large American frigate, carrying on one deck 36 forty-two pounders, and as large in length as a ship of the line. The hostile fleets came in sight of each other, on the Dogger bank, very early in the morning of the 5th of August 1781; and, without any manœuvring or delay, came within pistol shot, to one of the bloodiest actions that ever was fought between the same number of ships. After a cannonade of three hours and forty minutes, both fleets lay like logs in the water, incapable of action or mutual annoyance; and it could only be determined who had the better claims to victory, by comparing the destruction of ships and havoc of men on either side. The English counted 104 killed, and 359 wounded. The Dutch did not acknowledge their full loss; but it appeared, by authenticated private intelligence, that it exceeded 1100 in killed, wounded, and sunk. The *Hollandia*, one of their 68 gun ships, sunk in the night after the engagement; and, by the circumstance of the English striking and

CHAP.
XVII.

1781.

bringing off her colours, it appears that the action off the Dogger bank was, on the whole, a victory to the English arms. The other capital ships of the Dutch were rendered almost unfit for repair. Admiral Zoutman returned to the Texel; but neither he nor his convoy durst proceed on their former destination.

The public, though in this, as in Kempenfeldt's affair, they applauded the valour of their seamen, were yet extremely dissatisfied that so small a force had been allotted to Parker, when the object was so important, and the acquisition might have been easily rendered so important. The admiral himself justly complained of this circumstance, and, with open censure on the admiralty, resigned his command.

A naval expedition was planned, in the beginning of the campaign, under the command of Commodore Johnston. Its destination was against the Cape of Good Hope, in the first instance; and from thence the squadron was to have sailed for Buenos Ayres, on the coast of South-America. The court of France, however, anticipating our design, dispatched a considerable force from Brest, under M. de Suffrein, who overtook the English squadron at the Cape de Verde islands, and attacked them, though at anchor in a neutral harbour. As the attack was unexpected, some confusion at first prevailed on board the British ships; nor was the commodore's conduct passed without censure, for being found so unprepared, even where a neutral harbour gave a pretext for security. But the native valour of the British seamen prevailed, at last, over every disadvantage, and Suffrein was beaten off, with the loss of ninety-seven men.

As the destination of Johnston was known, the French admiral attempted, with too much success, to anticipate his arrival at the Cape; so that the

chief object of the expedition was entirely frustrated. The commodore returned to England, after conveying our India ships the length of the Cape, and capturing four ships of the Indiamen of the Dutch, which he found in Saldalma bay.

CHAP.
XVII.
1781.

The successes of the Spaniards in West-Florida have been already related. In spite of a dreadful disaster which overtook their principal islands, in the hurricane of the last year, they refitted again at the Havannah, and invested Pensacola by sea and land. The resistance offered at this place, by its comparatively small garrison, to a force of fifteen sail of the line and 8000 land-forces, was sufficiently reputable to the British arms; but the accidental blowing up of the principal redoubt obliged Governor Chester and General Campbell to surrender, by an honourable capitulation. Thus fell the capital of West-Florida, which had been held among the principal acquisitions obtained to Great Britain by the treaty of Paris.

May 9.

In the course of the war, the Dutch island of S^t. Eustatia had served as a depository for warlike stores, from which the Americans derived their principal supplies. In compliance with the orders of administration, to obtain possession of this valuable place, Admiral Rodney, returning from a fruitless attempt on S^t. Vincents, surrounded the island with his fleet, and found it wholly unprepared for resistance, from the ignorance of the governor that war had broken out between the states and England. S^t. Eustatia, therefore, surrendered at discretion, the governor only soliciting clemency for the inhabitants from the British commander. As the island was a free port, and had become the resort of mercantile adventure from all nations, the property which it contained was prodigious, and was estimated at three millions sterling. This booty, with 256 ships of all descriptions, and the

CHAP.
XVII.

1781.

neighbouring islands of S^t. Martin and Saba, fell into the hands of the British. The admiral also intercepted a fleet of twenty sugar ships, which had sailed for Holland about the same period. A general confiscation of the captured property took place; a measure which excited no small degree of censure, as large quantities of that property belonged to British merchants, and to the unfortunate, but loyal, refugees from America. The remonstrances of the British merchants of S^t. Kitts, who conveyed their complaint to Rodney through the medium of Mr. Glanville, the solicitor-general of that island, were rejected with disdain. The efforts of Mr. Burke in parliament, on the same subject, were more successful in exposing the lawless violence of the confiscation, than in procuring its redress: the British sufferers, instead of finding redress in parliament, were left at liberty to travel for restitution through the endless labyrinths of the law.

The issue, however, of this acquisition was scarcely more fortunate than it deserved. Of thirty vessels, laden with treasure, which were convoyed home by Commodore Hotham, twenty-five fell into the power of a French squadron, under M. de la Motte Piquet; and S^t. Eustatia itself surrendered, about the end of the year, by the dishonourable capitulation of its governor, Captain Cockburn.

The Dutch settlements of Demerara, Issequibo, and the Berbices, on the coast of Surinam, no sooner heard of the rupture between the states-general and Britain, than, finding that their own defenceless situation would only expose their trade to the ravages of privateers, they made a tender of submission to the British government, and were granted favourable conditions.

The return of Count de Grasse to the West Indies, with twenty sail of the line and a ship of 54

guns, attending a large convoy, and carrying 6000 land-troops on board, rendered the latter part of our naval campaign in the West Indies less successful than affairs had been when Rodney, even by indecisive engagements, could claim the honour of pursuing our enemies whenever they could be seen. Already the French force at Martinique and St. Domingo amounted, before De Grasse's arrival, to eight sail of the line. By his arrival, and by the circumstances already noticed, of Hotham's departure with the treasures of St. Eustatia, our marked inferiority made the prospect of a general action more to be dreaded than desired. To prevent, however, the junction of the French fleets, Rodney dispatched the Admirals Hood and Drake, with seventeen of the largest ships, to intercept De Grasse, remaining himself with a few ships beside St. Eustatia. Sir Samuel Hood stood directly off Fort-royal, at Martinique; but was unable to prevent four of the enemy's line from escaping to meet De Grasse. Still, with such unequal numbers, the French admiral declined, while the British courted, an engagement. The fleets, it is true, came once more to action, but it was distant and desultory. The British, though full of ardour to come to close quarters, could not carry the wind. Even the effect of their shot, it is said, was unequal to their efforts, from the dampness of the powder, which had been unfortunately exposed to moisture. 'Never,' says Sir Samuel Hood, in his account of the engagement, 'was so much powder and shot spent in vain.' Both fleets at last, as if by mutual consent, gave over firing, and both laid claims to victory. The loss of the British was not considerable (amounting to only 297 killed and hurt); yet the effects were scarcely short of a defeat, five of Sir Samuel Hood's ships being dis-

CHAP.
XVII.

478r.

CHAP.
XVII.

1781.

April 29.

abled; and their whole fleet being thus obliged, on the following day, when De Grasse sought to renew the action, to bear away for Antigua, while the enemy kept in vigorous pursuit.

May 10.

After this event, the obvious superiority of the French induced the marquis de Bouillé to attempt the reduction of St. Lucia. The attempt was unsuccessful, though the French, as an apology for their failure, pretended it was only a feint, to cover their more important designs on Tobago. To that island they unfortunately came on the 23^d of May. The governor, Colonel Ferguson, dispatched immediate intelligence to Sir George Rodney, who was, by this time, cruising off Barbadoes, but who, certainly under-rating the invading force and covering fleet of the enemy at Tobago, sent only six ships of the line, under Drake, to its relief. The militia of the island, meanwhile, retreating to the interior, supported a brave defence, till they were compelled to surrender by the devastations of De Bouillé, and by his threats, that he would burn every plantation on the plains, if they persisted in defence; and Rodney arrived off the island on the 4th of June, but too late for its preservation. The French fleet was so much more than a match for Drake's detachment, that, with his whole fleet, the British admiral thought it prudent not to risk an engagement.

The season was far advanced before these events had taken place, and the French West-India fleets were ready to sail for Europe. De Grasse, though greatly superior in numbers, did not seem determined to force the British to engage during the remainder of the summer months, but escorted a vast convy of his country's merchantmen on their way to Europe, and, returning westward again, proceeded with his fleet to the Chesapeak. Sir

George Rodney returned to England; but left a powerful proportion of his force to watch the count de Grasse on his Chesapeake expedition.

CHAP.

XXI.

1781.

The campaign of 1781 opened with favourable prospects to the British arms in America. Though the spirit of loyalty, which the victory of Camden revived in the Carolinas, was again rudely checked by the death and defeat of Major Ferguson, Cornwallis was, nevertheless, so considerably reinforced by the accession of 2,600 men from home, under General Leslie, that he still cherished the hopes and prospects of penetrating from the south into North-Carolina. From the northern army also, very sanguine expectations of succours were entertained.

Sir Henry Clinton, judiciously availing himself of the eagerness expressed by General Arnold to distinguish himself in the cause of the loyalists, dispatched him with a body of British and American soldiers, to make a diversion in the state of Virginia, supported by a naval armament which arrived in the Chesapeake. The violent discontents that were known to exist in the American camp at the opening of the year 1781, encouraged hopes of our being able to derive assistance from such as might join the British, like Arnold, in disgust at the conduct of congress. The fall of the continental currency, the remissness of those whose duty it was in America to provide and secure for the comforts of their countrymen in the field of battle, and the general inaptitude of the American inhabitants for supporting long marches and campaigns, under hardships to which a regular army is compelled by discipline to submit, occasioned those murmurs and remonstrances which at length ended in open mutiny. Thirteen hundred men of January the Pennsylvania line, which lay huddled at Morriston, marched out in a body from the head-quar-

CHAP.

XVII.

1781.

ters, and encamped in the vicinity of Princetown, with a general of their own creation, formerly a serjeant-major, who had deserted from the British lines. For sometime the mutineers declined all connection with their former associates, and returned their flags of truce without a satisfactory answer. Measures were used by Sir Henry Clinton to profit by this circumstance; but proposals for accommodation from their own countrymen having been previously offered and received, the insurgents returned from Princetown to Trenton, on the Delaware, and delivered up the agents of Clinton, who had stopped in their camp. Their grievances were redressed, and matters finally settled by a committee of the congress.

Meanwhile, to arrest the destructive career of Arnold in Virginia, General Washington determined to detach the marquis de la Fayette, with 1,200 infantry. The French Admiral D'Estouches, who had succeeded De Ternay in commanding the French squadron off that station, consented to co-operate in the attempt to capture Arnold. Their joint forces sailed for Virginia, from Rhode island, in the month of March. Admiral Arbuthnot, however, gaining intelligence of their destination, immediately sailed in pursuit of them, and engaging them off the capes of Virginia, succeeded in saving Arnold, by preventing the enemy from gaining the Chesapeak, though the action was, like too many of the naval engagements of that period, distant and indecisive. On the 25th of the same month, Arnold was reinforced by 2000 men, under the brave and experienced General Phillips. By this junction the British were enabled to mark their farther progress through Virginia with almost unresisted ravage. For several weeks, the business of devastation was continued, when our Virginian army was retalled to Petersburg, and soon after-

wards retreated to New-York, but not without the loss of their valuable commander, Phillips, who fell a victim to disease, aggravated by the hardships and fatigue of his campaign. The activity of Arnold had full scope during this predatory diversion; but his questionable reputation was little improved by the nature of the service which he performed, as his chief object was plunder and conflagration. At the last scene of his exploits, Fort-Griswold, near New-London, his troops were charged with the atrocity even of massacre. The commander of the fort, Colonel Ledyard, is said to have been butchered in the act of surrendering his sword, and the whole garrison to have suffered, without distinction.

CHAP.
XVII.

1781.

On the whole, it appeared that the operations designed to favour Lord Cornwallis did not justify expectation. In the midst of danger and distress, to which the southern states were exposed by the arms of that commander, the congress (says an historian of the American war), unable to forward men or money, sent, however, a general, whose military talents were equal to a reinforcement. On the 2^d of December, General Green had arrived at Charlotte-town, in North-Carolina, to command the southern army, who speedily detached 540 men, under General Morgan, to gain the western frontiers of South-Carolina, and threaten the British posts at Ninety-six; while the remaining force alarmed the country in front of Camden. The British commander in chief, conceiving this to be a favourable opportunity to assault the divided enemy, detached Tarleton, in the beginning of January, against Morgan, with orders *to push him to the utmost.* After a pursuit of some days, our troops overtook the enemy at Cowpens, near the Pacolet river, where both sides halted for battle. The judicious arrangement of Morgan decided the

CHAP.
XVII.

1780.

Battle of
Cowpens.

victory in his favour, his untrained militia being so instructed, as to retire with safety when broken, and his second line and reserve disposed to renew the action, by covering the raw recruits. On the first impetuous charge of Tarleton, the militia, as had been expected, were, for a time, thrown into confusion, and victory seemed more than half declared for the assailants. The second line also broke and retired, but the reserve cavalry, under Colonel Washington, charging the British when their line was spread and weakened by pursuit, immediately turned the fortune of the day; the Americans rallying with fixed bayonets, rushed on Tarleton's forces, whose route soon became irretrievable. The British infantry, though worn with fatigue, had begun the action with considerable spirit; but their strength was now unequal either for contest or flight, and the carnage was dreadful. The legion cavalry of Tarleton, a corps long distinguished for cruelty, but never before for cowardice, fled disgracefully, instead of saving the broken infantry. Three hundred of our countrymen fell, and 400 were taken prisoners. Tarleton, with a handful of his men and officers, cut his way through the enemy, and joined his headquarters. To repair the disaster as soon as possible, the commander in chief pressed upon Morgan with all his forces. Green, hastening with inferior numbers to cover the retreat of his lieutenant, attempted to check the progress of the British at the passes of the Catawba; but here Colonel Tarleton, as far as he had an opportunity of coming to action, retrieved the tarnish upon his fame so lately sustained at Cowpens, and attacking the American militia at Tarrant's tavern, routed a body of them, and hastened the retreat of Green's forces. Green, who was utterly unable to cope in fair battle with the British, to the great disap-

pointment of the British commander, effected a quick and judicious retreat into Virginia.

CHAP.
XVII.

No measure could be more necessary or expedient, than General Green's retreat. He recruited his forces in Virginia; while Cornwallis's troops, overwhelmed with fatigue, and lessened even by their victories, had but the slight advantage of gaining ground on an exhausted country, where their enemies were numerous and insidious, and their friends, in spite of all proclamations, few and timid. But it was necessary by the Americans to make Virginia any more than a temporary retreat. They made their appearance again in North-Carolina, and gradually advanced, as Cornwallis, for want of provisions, was obliged to retire to a new but unpromising position, between the Haw and Deep rivers. Green now increased his forces very rapidly, by desertions from the royalists of North-Carolina. But, though superior in numbers, he still cautiously avoided an action, till the arrival of expected reinforcements. For seven days he lay within ten miles of Cornwallis's camp, taking a new position every night, and concealing, with great address, the spot of each intended encampment. By these manœuvres he parried off an engagement for three weeks, at the expiration of which time he was reinforced by three brigades of militia and 400 regulars. With a force now amounting to 6000 men, he no longer shunned an engagement, and on the 15th of March gave battle to Cornwallis, on a position chosen by himself, at Guildford Court-house. His lordship, with 2000 men, eagerly advanced to the conflict. The North-Carolina militia, which formed the first American line, gave way at the first onset; the Virginia militia, who composed the second and third, stood their ground more firmly; but at last they also were driven before the British, and compelled to

1781.
February.

CHAP.
XVII

1781

retreat ten miles from the scene of action. A dear-bought victory was won by the British, whose loss came nearly to a third of their whole strength; but the fruits of the victory were insignificant, although the price was high, as the victorious general, instead of advancing, found himself obliged to leave a number of his wounded to the care of the enemy, and to proceed for shelter, and the bare necessities of life, on a dreadful march, through woods, creeks, and morasses, for the space of 600 miles, to the sea-port town of Wilmington.

While the main armies were thus engaged, the hopes of the republicans in South-Carolina were ably supported by the exertions of the generals Sumpter and Marion, and other active partizans. The influence of their success kept alive the American cause, till General Green, returning from the pursuit of Cornwallis (who, though victor at Guildford, was pursued by his antagonist for some days after the battle) to the south, enabled the republicans to commence, in their turn, a plan of offensive hostilities. They reduced Fort Watson, situated between Camden and Charlestown, a fortification erected on an Indian mount, more than thirty feet high, by laboriously raising works, which overlooked and commanded the garrison. In this manner, which revived the ancient system of siege, the Americans were successful on more than one occasion.

By the retreat of Cornwallis into Virginia, Lord Rawdon was left alone in Carolina, to combat the forces of Green. But being apprized of the enemy's approach, when Green, with 2000 men, took his station at Hobkirk's hill, though his lordship's own forces at Camden did not amount to 1000 men, he determined, with becoming spirit, not to wait his approach, but sallied from his entrenchments

before the enemy's numbers could receive a farther accession, and killed or destroyed 500 of Green's army. By the battle of Hobbs's hill, which was fought on the 25th of April, Lord Rawdon escaped being besieged with superior numbers in Camden; but his own troops, after his victory, being diminished by 250 men, he was still unable to keep a position in the presence of Green. In hopes, however, of receiving some important reinforcements at Charlestown, and to avoid being surrounded in Camden, he was obliged to evacuate that station, and retire to Monk's corner, for the protection of Charlestown, the defences of which were in a feeble state, as Lord Cornwallis had demolished the most of the works before his departure. About the same time, the American generals Lee and Marion captured Fort Mifflin on the Congaree. Orangeburgh yielded to Sumpter, and Lee reduced Fort Granby. The British posts now surrendered in quick succession, and, by the 15th of June, the fort of Ninety-six was the only one which resisted. The siege of this place was raised on the 18th by Lord Rawdon, who, by a timely reinforcement of his forces, was enabled to march to its relief with 2000 men; and the American army was once more obliged to retreat. By the dexterous evasion of a general engagement, Green was, however, enabled to prevent Lord Rawdon from establishing garrisons in several places which he endeavoured to fortify. The British were thus compelled to concentrate their whole force, and, by this necessity, which precluded the certain supply of provisions, it became at last necessary for Lord Rawdon to abandon Ninety-six, after which the British lines were contracted within forty miles of Charlestown. Lord Rawdon's views seemed at last, by motives of humanity, as well as of necessity, to be concentrated in the sole object of protecting from the

CHAP.
XVII

1781

vengeance of the republicans those unfortunate Carolinian loyalists who still adhered to the British standard. He therefore retreated before the forces of Green, till the heat of summer compelled both parties to a temporary suspension of hostilities. The state of his lordship's health shortly afterwards obliging him to return to his native climate, the command of his forces devolved on Colonel Stuart. Green having at once reinforced his army in numbers, and improved them in discipline, resolved to attack the British forces. On the 8th of September he fought a severe action with Colonel Stuart, at the Eutaw springs, in which the victory, though doubtful, is generally claimed by the Americans, and the effects of which were certainly adequate to a defeat, as it affected the affairs of the British. Their operations were from this time confined to the immediate vicinity of Charlestown.

After the battle of Guildford, Lord Cornwallis had marched to Wilmington, in North-Carolina, from whence he proceeded in his intended expedition into Virginia. His progress was for some time unresisted, and marked by the destruction of all the stores and resources of war, by which the enemy had organized their resistance in that province. At Hallifax he defeated some parties of the enemy; and, in less than a month, his march from Wilmington to Petersburg was effected. On the 20th of May he joined the army which Phillips had commanded, and had the farther gratification of finding it reinforced by 1,800 men from the headquarters of Clinton. The only force to oppose his lordship in Virginia was that commanded by La Fayette; a force so indifferently appointed, that in writing his military dispatches; his lordship expressed the most unqualified assurance of being able to overtake and subdue him. The marquis, however,

not only eluded pursuit, but continued to harass the outposts of the British, till the thickening misfortunes of the British cause enabled him to change his desultory warfare for a more effective plan of hostilities.

CHAP.
XVII.

4781.

But the genius of Washington was destined, by one important blow, to finish this harassing and tedious campaign. After the first junction of the American commander with the count de Rochambeau, the immediate vicinity of Clinton's army naturally attracted the attention of the allies to New-York; and a plan for attacking it had been for sometime concerted, when the progress of Cornwallis in Virginia, and the final destination of the French fleet under De Grasse for the Chesapeake, induced them to lay aside their intentions on New-York, and co-operate against Cornwallis. From that period the thoughts of Washington were employed in the necessary measure of quieting General Clinton's fears of any southern march being attempted by the allied armies, and keeping him in constant alarm for the fate of his own head-quarters. Affecting, therefore, to be still determined on the siege of New-York, the French and American commanders frequently reconnoitred the island on both sides from the opposite shore; and, to make appearances more serious, sent their engineers to take plans of the works, under the very fire of the batteries. Washington made even the intercepting of his correspondence subservient to his plan of delusion. He wrote to his officers, by letters which designedly reached our commander, that now, or never, the quarters of Clinton must be forced; and that he despaired of success in the war, if that officer, so formidable to the American cause, by his courage, his invention, and his prudence, were allowed to protract his stay in New-York. The credulity of Clinton swallowed a stra-

CHAP.
XVII.
1781.

tagem so well baited with his own praises; and the allies were suffered to depart for the south, while the British general gave credit to his own sagacity for discovering that this fatal march was only a feint to decoy him from his quarters.

On the 30th of August, the count de Grasse, with twenty-eight sail of the line, entered the Chesapeake; and Cornwallis, who was posted near York-town, on the peninsula between York and James river, received, at the same time, the alarming intelligence, that the French and American army were rapidly advancing towards Virginia. Three thousand two hundred French, under the marquis de S^t. Simon, speedily disembarked from De Grasse's fleet; and joining their active countryman La Fayette, at Williamsburgh, from which place all the efforts of Cornwallis had not been able to drive him, they effectually inclosed the British by land. Cornwallis, it has been said, at this crisis, might have saved himself, by sallying forth, as Rawdon did from Camden, and forcing a retreat before the united armies had begun their parallels round his works; but that desperate measure either the orders of his lordship from home, or the hopes of relief from Clinton, forbade him to embrace. The grand fleet of De Grasse was also, fatally for this army, reinforced by eight ships of the line, under Admiral de Barras. On the first intelligence of the Chesapeake expedition, our admiral, Graves, set sail to prevent the junction of the enemy's main fleet and their reinforcement. De Grasse, however, came out from the Chesapeake; and, though an indecisive engagement took place, yet an opportunity was given to De Barras, during the manœuvring of De Grasse and Graves, to avoid them both, by a circuit, and get within the Chesapeake. Our fleet therefore returned, after effecting nothing.

At last, but too late, the eyes of Clinton were opened, as from a dream, to the true meaning of Washington's departure, and the dangers of our army in Virginia. On the 14th of September, General Washington and the count de Rochambeau arrived at Williamsburgh, and, on the 25th of the same month, the whole of the allied forces, amounting to 12,000, rendezvoused there, and in five days moved down to the investiture of York-town and Gloucester, the only points which it was now possible for the British troops to defend. Relying on succours from Sir Harry Clinton, Cornwallis unexpectedly withdrew his army within the works of the town, which were immediately besieged by the enemy, while the post at Gloucester was firmly blockaded. But, on the 9th of October, no succours had arrived, and a few days after two chief redoubts in front of the works were taken by storm, by large bodies of the French and Americans. The vigorous fire from the fortifications, and successive sorties by the troops, under his best officers, could retard, but not prevent, the approach of the enemy. His lordship attempted a retreat across the river; but a storm arising just as some of his boats had crossed, the rest were detained, and the few troops who had ferried over with difficulty regained the garrison.

Thus pressed and surrounded, Cornwallis had no resource, but to surrender his whole army prisoners of war to Washington, and the vessels in the harbour to count de Grasse. The posts of York and Gloucester were given up on the 19th of October. The troops amounted to between 5,000 and 6,000 men; but such was the number of sick and wounded, that there were only 3,800, of all descriptions, capable of bearing arms.

In the meantime, Sir Henry Clinton had draughted from the garrison at New-York a corps of 7000

CHAP.
XVII

1781.

of his best troops, with which he proposed to embark on board the king's ships, and impatiently waited for the moment when the fleet would be ready to sail. He had already informed Lord Cornwallis, that it was hoped the fleet would start from New-York about the 5th of October; and afterwards, from the assurances given him by the admiral, that it might pass the bar by the 12th instant, if the winds permitted, and no unforeseen accident occurred. But the fleet did not finally leave Sandy-hook till the 19th, the day on which Lord Cornwallis surrendered. The troops were embarked, and the fleet put to sea; but it was with extreme mortification, on arriving off the capes of Virginia on the 24th, that they received such accounts as led them to believe that the fate of the unfortunate army was already decided. They remained, however, off the mouth of the Chesapeake till, from the information that reached them, no doubt of the event could remain; and, as the relief of Cornwallis had been the sole object of the expedition, the admiral determined to return to New-York. The British fleet, at this time, consisted of twenty-five ships of the line, two 50 gun ships, and eight frigates. That of the French amounted to thirty-six sail of the line, and a multitude of frigates. The last letter written by Lord Cornwallis to the commander in chief, acquainting him with the surrender of the posts of York and Gloucester, and relating the cause that led to that event, with the motives which had influenced his own conduct, produced a difference between them, that terminated in an appeal to the public.

Such was the issue of the Virginian campaign. The surrender at York-town was the concluding scene of offensive war with America.

Towards the end of the year, the Dutch settlements of Demerara and Issequibo were recovered

by the French, and early in 1782 the marquis de Bouillé, with 8000 men, and assisted by the powerful fleet of De Grasse, invaded the island of St. Christophers. The governor, General Fraser, retiring, with 600 men, to the fortified heights of the island, held out for some time; while Admiral Sir Samuel Hood, having drawn out the enemy by a dexterous manœuvre, and then seized the anchorage ground in Bassatterre harbour, endeavoured to save the island; but, though they repulsed the enemy's navy, no effort could protect the land troops on the station of Brimstone hill, now become untenable from the superior fire of the enemy. General Fraser having capitulated on sufficiently honourable terms, the English squadron returned to Barbadoes. The small islands of Nevis and Montserrat soon shared the fate of St. Kitts; and Jamaica itself was seriously threatened with a French and Spanish invasion.

CHAP.
XVII.
1781.

Feb. 8.

CHAP. XVIII.

Meeting of parliament in November 1781 . . . Debates on the address, and on the subject of the war . . . Division of opinion among the whigs, on the subject of American independence . . . Impeachment of Lord Sandwich . . . Resignation of the secretary of state for America, Lord George Germaine . . . Rising numbers of the opposition . . . Ministers outvoted on the 27th of February . . . Subsequent motions carried by the opposition . . . Recovery of a ministerial majority on two occasions . . . Lord North at last announces the termination of his own administration . . . New administration formed . . . Discussion of Irish affairs . . . Mr. Burke's economical bill is carried . . . Mr. Pitt's motion for reform . . . Rodney's naval campaign in the West Indies . . . Capture of Dutch forts on the coast of Africa . . . Capture of Minorca by the duke de Crillon . . . Hostilities by sea and land in the East Indies . . . Siege of Gibraltar.

CHAP.
XVIII.

1781.

DURING these distresses of Britain, the neutral continental powers made no efforts of mediation, that could be considered as either fair or friendly to our cause. An offer was indeed suggested by the court of Vienna, to arrange disputes by a congress of English, French, Spanish, and American ministers; but, independent of the preliminary terms being unfavourable to Britain, as they required an immediate suspension of arms, the idea of admitting American agents to the congress, to have their claims enforced by French and Spanish ministers, was regarded by our court as inadmissible, and derogatory to the national ho-

nour. The Austrian minister, Kaunitz, after comparing the proposals of Britain with those of the other belligerents, at length declared his hopes of negotiation to be at an end. He admitted the dignity of that resolution by which the cabinet of this country rejected an arbitration of her quarrel with America by hostile interference; but, with many commentaries on the weakness of our power to support that dignity, he advised us to make concessions for the sake of peace. From this language of insulting condolence there was little hope of farther mediation. Indeed the partiality of the emperor Joseph II for France soon became as decided as that of his minister; and one of the first acts of his reign was acceding to the armed neutrality.

From hostile confederacies, and disasters abroad, the ministry could not turn, without alarm, to the growing dissatisfaction of the nation. The bad principles of the war, which might have passed with impunity among a large class of politicians at home, had they been crowned with success, began to be more generally questioned, as the project of coercing America appeared more palpably impracticable. The authority of the mother country had been so often explained and qualified, and by ministers themselves partially renounced, that it was now regarded as less sacredly necessary to be maintained, and less essentially decisive of the ruin of the nation, if it should be renounced. The pride of the country, habituated to anticipate the event of American independence, grew at last familiar with degradation; the pressure of more substantial evils was immediate, and almost intolerable. All that had been predicted by the wisdom of Chatham, and of Fox, respecting the issue of the contest, was now fatally fulfilled, by the surrender of the southern army. The public could no longer

CHAP. remain blind to the future effects of the war, or
XVIII. sleep in their former torpid security.

1781.

Nov. 27. It excited, however, considerable surprise, when parliament met, that no prospect of peace was held out in the language of the throne, to which the answering address was to be regarded as the pledge of the legislature for the support or dereliction of the present measures. The continuance of the war was, in the royal speech, ascribed to the restless ambition of our enemies; and the highest congratulations were offered to the public on the arrival of our commercial fleets, and the prosperous aspect of our East-Indian affairs. In the house of commons, the motion for an address produced a debate of length and importance suited to the magnitude of the question at issue, and the high hopes of opposition to avail themselves of the changing sentiments of the nation. The declaration in the proposed address to pledge the house to unqualified support of the war, after seven years of disaster, and the boldness of holding such language, at the very moment when the calamities brought on by ministers called for penitence and humiliation, were topics urged by Mr. Fox, with his accustomed fervour and ability. He entered, with severe reprehension, into the principles of the war, the delusions by which parliament had been led on, year after year, to support it, and the gross and criminal mismanagement which appeared in every branch of administration. To the negligence and incapacity of Lord Sandwich, Mr. Fox ascribed the loss of the army under Cornwallis. That minister, he said, had declared in another assembly, that a first lord of the admiralty, who should fail in having a fleet equal to the combined naval force of the whole house of Bourbon, would deserve to be dragged from his situation to condign pu-

nishment. The case, he contended, was now before them. The inferiority of the British fleet, in every quarter of the globe, might be proved from the events of the campaign; and he conjured the house to bring their marine minister to the reward which his own confession had pronounced that he had merited. It had been confessed by one of the highest members of administration, Mr Fox observed, that if the capture of Charlestown produced no decisive consequences, he should grow weary of the war. That event had come, and brought disasters in its train; and yet ministers were not weary of the war: on the contrary, they seemed to love it, as it grew more calamitous. He concluded by moving an amendment to the address, which should leave the expediency of continuing the war open to future debate, instead of binding the house to, any specific course of measures. The impression which this speech seemed to make on the house, and the silence of those who had been accustomed, on all occasions, to justify the principles and the policy of the American war, called up the minister very early in this debate. He defended the ground of the colonial contest. He asserted that the war was not maintained for the prerogative of the king, but of parliament, against which the revolted Americans had unjustly taken arms. The king's speech, and the proposed address of parliament, he said, did not necessarily imply that the house would be pledged to the continuance of the war. This plea the minister and his associates were the better enabled to maintain, as both the speech and address, though substantially, did not literally, describe the object of intended measures to be offensive hostilities with America. A melancholy disaster, said his lordship, has occurred in Virginia; but are we, therefore, to lie down and die? No; by dejection and

CHAP.

XVIII.

1781.

despair, every thing must be lost; by bold exertions, every thing may be saved. The war has been unfortunate, but not unjust; and, should the share I have had in supporting a war, defensive of parliamentary rights and the British constitution, lead me to the scaffold, my opinion should remain unaltered. This language looked like the boldness of a man convinced of his own rectitude; but it was ill suited to the times; and, when ministers denied that their proposed address implied an intention to prosecute war, such a speech from Lord North needed no commentary to form a refutation of their own interpretation of that motion. The lord-advocate for Scotland (Mr. Dundas) spoke at great length in support of the address. If by an American war, he said, was meant a continental war in America, conducted on the same military principles as heretofore, the house might have reason to be cautious in pledging themselves to its support. But, if the retention and defence of such places as were still left in our possession in America were to be called an American war, and, under that denomination, to be reprobated, he did not think the house yet ripe for such a decision. Burke rose indignantly at the pertinacity of ministers. The war, he said, had teemed with calamities; but this speech of the king's was the greatest calamity of all. Most excellent rights! he exclaimed (in allusion to North's defence of the war as a vindication of parliamentary rights), which have cost Britain thirteen provinces, four islands, 100,000 men, and seventy millions of money, her empire over the ocean, her rank among nations, her dignity and her commerce abroad, her happiness at home; which have taken all this, and yet threaten to spoil us of what remains. Mr. Fox's amendment was negatived.

In the upper house, a similar amendment to the address, supported by the duke of Richmond, the earl of Shelburne, the marquis of Rockingham, Lord Camden, and other noblemen of the minority, experienced the same rejection.

On bringing up the report of the address, the debate was renewed, and principally distinguished by the eloquence of Pitt, who described the disunion already prevalent among ministers, with convincing vigour and effect, and insisted, that, after a comparison of the sentiments individually delivered in public by these ministers, no confidence, no union subsisted among them, and that all confidence of the nation ought necessarily to be withdrawn from them. Such reasoning, from this distinguished speaker, was calculated to strike more directly at the power of administration than the most forcible reasoning on the abstract principles of the war, or its practical mismanagement; to shew that the fabric of the cabinet was verging to its decline, was the surest mode of accelerating the event. Of the majority that ministers yet possessed, numbers were only attached by the vulgar fidelity, which chooses the stronger side. Every alarm of approaching fall annihilated the aid of those supporters, and this alarm Mr. Pitt's speech in no common degree contributed to produce. During the debates that prevailed before the recess, some subordinate subjects of censure were introduced by the opponents of ministry, of which the principal was Mr. Burke's motion respecting the confiscation of property at St. Eustatia; an action which, he said, disgraced us in the eyes of civilized Europe. With no less severe reproach he inveighed against the terms of Cornwallis's surrender, by which, to the disgrace of British humanity, no article had been obtained for the preservation of the American loyalists in Cornwallis's

CHAP.
XVIII.

1781.

army. The motions on these subjects were separately negatived. *

In debating the army estimates the grand principle of the war became again a subject of controversy; when, encouraged by their increasing influence, and by the daily desertion of ministerial members to their standard, the opposition assumed a bolder tone, and even the motion of a committee of supply was strenuously refused. In answer to the assertion of ministers, that this revival of an obsolete measure, to cramp the executive government, was unprecedented since the revolution, and replete with danger to the nation, it was proved by Mr. Fox, Mr. Montague, Mr. Thomas Pitt, and others of their antagonists, that this was the chief and the true constitutional power which was lodged in the hands of parliament, to exercise restraint over the conduct of ministers; and that to forego it would be to resign the very bulwark of parliamentary power. They maintained, that if no precedent to that effect had occurred since the revolution, it was only because no administration had been ever so persevering in their system of pernicious measures. The minister was weakened, but not overpowered by these repeated motions. He continued, on this occasion, to exercise a majority, which, by an extraordinary muster, amounted to 95. Not discouraged by these defeats, while they beheld the views of the nation growing every day more favourable to their cause, and even in parliament the adherents of ministry gradually melting away, the minority, on the 12th of December, renewed their opposition to the war, under the form of a specific motion. The terms, which were cautiously worded, went to declare, that all farther efforts for the coercion of America would be injurious to the interests of the country. No debate could be productive of deeper interest, or

evoked a more copious display of the strength, the wisdom, and the eloquence of the numerous body of opposition, than this question. It was less memorable for the talents displayed by ministers, than for the contradiction of sentiment which it drew forth; if we compare those sentiments either among themselves, or contrast them with the proud boasts of the cabinet at the opening of American hostilities. Lord North avowed his opinion, *'that it would neither be wise nor right to prosecute the war in America any longer on a continental plan, that is, by sending fresh armies to march through the colonies, in order by those marches to subdue America to obedience; but as posts could not be abandoned, nor commerce be supported against American cruizers, he resisted the motion for a total suspension of war.* He was supported in his objections by Welbore Ellis and Lord George Germaine; the latter of whom declared, *'with more manliness than North, that he would retire from his official station whenever the American war was to be abandoned.* It was remarkable also in this debate, that a certain portion of the opposition, who, though attached to the great body of the whigs, were yet more immediately connected with the Earl of Shelburne, spoke on the subject of the continuance of the war with great caution and reserve. The question of independence having unavoidably arisen in the course of the day, Mr. Dunning declared it to be his opinion, that the guilt of declaring America independent would be little short of high treason. The motion for the order of the day at last setting aside the original question, was carried by a majority of 40; only 20 of the usual supporters of administration having sided with the minority.

The debate was renewed on the 14th of December, when the powers of Pitt were again strenu-

CHAP.
XVIII.

1781.

ously employed in describing the total contradiction of principles which prevailed in the present cabinet; that they were at war with each other's opinion, distrustful of mutual support, yet that they meanly continued in power for the enjoyment of office, and stood responsible for measures of which they could not approve. Their only principle of coherence, their only common object, seemed to be the ruin of the empire; and that, he feared, they would accomplish, ere the vengeance of the people could overtake them. 'And, God grant,' added Mr. Pitt, 'that that punishment be not so long delayed as to involve a great and innocent family, who, though they share not the guilt, most likely will participate in the atonement.' From the period of this debate to the winter recess, the attention of parliament was chiefly called to business of inferior interest.* The adjournment was not carried in either house without severe opposition. The crimination of ministers, as usual, mingled with the debate respecting adjournment; but,

* The supplies granted by parliament for the year 1782 amounted to £23,261,477:11:0½, which, with a vote of credit of £1,000,000, amounted to £24,261,477:11:0½. The ways and means, including a loan of £13,500,000, and exchequer bills to the amount of £1,500,000, with the lottery, taxes, surplus and sinking funds, and the vote of credit, composed £24,244,373, and some fractions, leaving a deficiency of £17,000.

Additional taxes were imposed on malt, beer, salt, tobacco, brandies, and 3 per cent. additional on all customs and excise.

The new taxes were imposed on stamps, inland water-carriage, and all coasting carriage, coals excepted.

The number of men voted for the navy was 100,000. The army

continued, with little change, on its old establishment.

The enormous amount of the ordnance estimates occasioned a strict examination. They were stated at the sum of £1,644,242. It was not without just cause that opposition inveighed against the practice of affording government contracts to the minions of ministerial favour. It was proved, during the course of this inquiry, that, in procuring the article of saltpetre, a contract had been made with an individual, at £37 per ton (ready money) dearer than the East-India company were willing to have given it on credit. Mr. Burke and Colonel Burke made each an unsuccessful motion, tending to censure the board of ordnance, upon the grounds afforded by the above investigation.

of the charges brought against them, a wider view was reserved for the contests of party which succeeded the present recess. The house adjourned till the 21st of January; and, two days after, the grand business of inquiry into the causes of the want of success of his majesty's naval force, more particularly during the year 1781. The leading measure of this attack on ministers, was the long meditated inquiry into the conduct of the first lord of the admiralty. Mr. Fox opened the motion for a committee of inquiry, to consist of the whole house, in a very long and able speech. On that day an animated debate took place on the merits and demerits of the admiralty; but the decisive inquiry of the committee was, for various reasons, delayed till the 7th of the following month, when the same illustrious mover came forward as the accuser, and Lord Mulgrave as the principal defender, of Lord Sandwich. Mr. Fox founded his motion of censure on facts contained in the papers which were laid as evidence before the house. In the course of the inquiry it appeared, that in 1777, when the hostilities of France were evidently impending, the admiralty had been wholly negligent of preparing means of defence; so that, when Admiral Keppel arrived at Portsmouth, in the following spring, to command a nominal fleet of twenty-six ships of the line, he found only six fit and ready for service. It farther appeared, that the admiralty were apprized of D'Estaing's equipment at Toulon, in sufficient time to have disputed his passage out of the Mediterranean; that neither advantage was taken of that knowledge, nor information communicated to our admiral, to apprise him of the danger to which he might be exposed; that in 1779 the formidable junction of the allied fleets might have been prevented; that Rodney ought to have been dispatched, but had not been dispatched,

CHAP.
XVIII.
1781.

January
1782.

Feb. 7.

CHAP.
XVIII.

1782.

towards the close of the same year, to intercept Admiral de Guichen from Brest; that in 1780 the hostile fleets had again combined, through the tardiness of instructions sent to Admiral Geary, to prevent their junction; that the chevalier de Ternay had been permitted to sail, unblest, to America, with those troops who afterwards captured Cornwallis; and, at the same disgraceful period, Captain Moutray, with the valuable East and West India convoys, was '*betrayed*' into the hands of the enemy; so that, had the noble earl at the head of the admiralty been hired in the pay of the house of Bourbon, he could not have acted in their service with better zeal or fidelity. Such was the picture of mismanagement during a succession of past years. In the transactions of the present year, Mr. Fox confined his censure to five capital charges. The first was, having suffered De Grasse to sail for the West Indies, without a single effort to intercept him. The equipment, the strength, the time of sailing, and destination, of this enemy, it appeared, were all known to our government. Admiral Darby, with superior force, had been destined for the relief of Gibraltar; a service for which he was not ordered to sail till some days after De Grasse's departure, although he was ready for sea many days before De Grasse left Brest; and if that interval of time had been employed by the admiral, our superior fleet must have met that of France, and averted all our losses in the West Indies. The second accusation was founded on the loss of the *S^t. Eustatia* convoy. From the papers on the table, it was established, that Rodney had acquainted ministers with the sailing and the value of the convoy; but that the tardiness of their measures had not allowed them to apprize Admiral Darby (who was cruising off Ireland during the capture) till ten days after

the capture was effected. The third charge, was their public declaration of a falsehood, contained in a letter written to the mayor of Bristol by the board of naval administration. The merchants of Bristol, anxious for the safety of their ships, had written to government an account of the rumour (and it was a true rumour), that the combined fleets of the enemy were cruising off the Channel. A letter, however, was written to the admiralty, acquainting them that the whole was without foundation. Thus the merchants of Bristol were deceived by the very words of their own government, and the commercial wealth of the country exposed a prey to the enemy. The last charge of neglect, respected the fleet of Admiral Parker, who had been sent to the northern seas with an insufficient force, at a period when there were ships enough unemploy- ed to have captured Zoutman with his whole convoy.

Lord Sandwich was but feebly defended by his friend Lord Mulgrave against those heavy accusations; but, by an unusual muster of ministerial strength, his acquittal was obtained by a majority of twenty-two votes.*

During these debates, the protracted support of administration in parliament, though fast diminishing, was not a fair testimony of the public feeling, which already was wound up to the highest impatience, at the burdens and continuance of the war. This general dissatisfaction appeared in petitions and remonstrances to the throne. On the 18th of December, the livery of London addressed the king, to deprecate the continuance of those men

* The arguments of Lord Mulgrave, it is no great inference to anticipate, in repelling these charges, that the reader's judgment, charges, are satisfactorily answered, should be drawn from them, will not from the parliamentary debates, in favour of the first lord of the Admiralty.

CHAP.
XVIII.

1782.

and measures, of which they lamented that the royal speech, at the opening of the session, had augured no change or melioration. 'Your majesty's ministers,' said the remonstrants, 'have, by false assertions and fallacious suggestions, deluded your majesty and this nation into the present disastrous war. Your fleets have lost their wonted superiority; your dominions have been captured; and your majesty's subjects have been loaded with taxes, which would have been calamitous, even if our victories had acquired dominions, instead of losses having dismembered the empire. We humbly exhort your majesty not to continue longer in a delusion from which the nation has awakened, and to dismiss from your councils and confidence all public, as well as secret, advisers of these destructive measures.'

The division in the cabinet respecting American affairs, so loudly declared by Mr. Pitt, appeared to be now authenticated, by the secession of the secretary of state for the American department, Lord George Germaine, who, after his retirement from office, was dignified with the peerage, and title of Viscount Sackville. This nobleman was not, however, suffered to take his seat in the upper house, without a violent impeachment of the right of the crown to confer so distinguished a mark of royal favour on an officer who had undergone, during the late reign, the express condemnation of a court-martial, and had been pronounced guilty of misdemeanour in the field of battle. Lord Caermarthen made a motion, in the peers, for his rejection, and was supported by other lords of opposition. The secretary stood this severely personal attack with little emotion, and contended that a sentence which was so remote in date, which he alleged to have been unfair, and which, at all events, had been but a military sen-

tence, could have no influence on his civil promotion, nor debar him from the free grant of his majesty's favour and distinction. The motion of his antagonist was set aside by a majority of the house of peers. From whatever causes the secretary resigned, the appointment of Mr. Welbore Ellis to be his successor, and of Sir Guy Carleton to be commander in chief in North America, disappointed, for a moment, those hopes which the resignation had inspired, and, from the principles of the new nominees, created a new alarm, that the desperate coercion of America was still in contemplation. Another attempt was therefore made in the commons, to bind up the hands of the executive by a strong and explicit declaration of parliament.

With this view, General Conway moved, on the 22^d of February, that his majesty should be implored by the house to forego the impracticable purpose of reducing the colonies by force. The new secretary, Mr. Ellis, evinced by his opposition to the motion, that his sentiments on the war were not different from those of his predecessor. He concluded a speech, which, though fraught with some expressions of a wish for peace, was yet decidedly of a hostile tone, by asserting that the loyalists were still the most numerous party in America. The other secretary, Mr. Jenkinson, was less ceremonious in his treatment of the pacific motion. It had been declared, at a former period, by ministers, that the war was now to be reduced to a war of posts. By a war of posts, however, Mr. Jenkinson said, he understood not merely a defensive plan of operations, but occasionally sallying from those posts to occupy new positions.

This explanation, added to the vehement philippics of the former speaker against the tyranny

CHAP.
XVIII.

1782.

of congress over the loyalty of our American friends, exhibited the views of the cabinet in the clearest light. But the decision of the house was, in reality, a triumph to opposition; for the motion was lost but by a single vote, and the majority of the absent members were known to be adverse to ministers.

In full confidence of still farther success, General Conway proposed the same motion on the 27th of February, under a different form. The debate, although upon grounds long ago and repeatedly trodden, was rendered copious and earnest by the hopes and fears of the contending parties. Lord North, after an able defence, in which the attorney-general, Mr. Wallace, was his chief supporter, at last proposed an adjournment, as the best means of evading an approaching defeat. He was baffled in this resource by a superiority of nineteen votes, when, at a late hour, and in a full house of 250 members, the original question, and an address to the king, formed upon the resolution, were carried without a division, and ordered to be presented by the whole house. This was the decisive vote which announced Lord North's administration to be irrecoverably fallen. On Monday the royal answer to the resolution was reported to the commons; and the thanks of the house being unanimously voted to his majesty for his gracious answer, General Conway rose and moved, that the house should consider as enemies to his majesty and the country all those who should advise, or by any means attempt, the farther prosecution of offensive war, for the purpose of reducing the revolted colonies of America. The motion, after a feeble opposition from the government members, was at length suffered to pass. These resolutions were received by the public with general demonstrations of joy.

To follow up the successes of the ascending party, and bring matters at once to an issue, the following resolutions were moved by Lord John Cavendish, and seconded by Mr. Powys.—‘That it appears to this house, that, since the year 1775; upwards of an hundred millions of money have been expended on the army and navy, on a fruitless war. That, during the above period, we have lost the thirteen colonies of America, which anciently belonged to the crown of Great Britain (except the posts of New-York, Charlestown, and the Savannah), the newly-acquired colony of Florida, many of our valuable West-India and other islands, and those that remain are in the most imminent danger. That Great Britain is at present engaged in an expensive war with America, France, Spain, and Holland, without a single ally. And that the chief cause of all these misfortunes has been the want of foresight and ability in his majesty’s ministers.’ The debate lasted till two in the morning, when the house divided on the order of the day, which had been moved by the secretary at war, and which, in spite of the expectations of the opposition, was carried by a majority of ten.

CHAP.
XVIII.1781.
March 8.

On the 15th, Sir John Rous, seconded by Lord John Cavendish, after reciting the facts contained in the motion of the 8th of the month, proposed to resolve, that the house could have no farther confidence in the present directors of public affairs. In the new debate it was admitted, by ministers, for the first time, that some new arrangements would be necessary in public affairs. A coalition was loudly called for by many members, who wished for a change, but still more for a consolidation of strength. Lord North himself was observed to speak with considerable emotion and embarrassment, which the peculiarity of his situation, and

March.]

CHAP.
XVIII.

1782.

the violent personal attacks to which he was exposed, excited, in spite of his wanted good humour and equanimity. He concluded a long defence of his conduct by declaring, that he neither was, nor would be, an obstacle to a coalition of parties, or to a formation of any new administration, from which he might be totally excluded. Nearly 480 members voted on this question; the yet-existing ministry gained it by a majority of nine.

March 20.

The 20th of the same month was the day expected to produce a great and decisive debate, on the motion which was promised by Lord Surrey, who announced his intended motion for voting to address the throne for a removal of ministers. On that day, before his lordship could open the question, Lord North presented himself to the house, but was not heard without some difficulty, as the independent members, distrustful of his motives, insisted on Lord Surrey being heard in preference. By the interposition of Mr. Fox, however, Lord North having obtained audience, he declared that he had authority to assure the house, that his majesty's ministry was at an end. His lordship then took leave of the house in the character of minister, in a speech which had at least the usual merit of his other speeches, that of being perfectly unblemished by the asperity of personal reproach.

During the adjournment of parliament, a new administration was formed, on as broad a basis as the nature of things would admit; and included the most distinguished personages among the two great parties who divided the whig interest: the Rockingham party, which borrowed its name from the auspices of that amiable nobleman, and its vigour and popularity from the talents of Fox; and that other party, which, since the death of Chatham, had been accustomed to regard Lord Shelburne as

their political leader. The marquis of Rockingham was appointed first lord of the treasury, the earl of Shelburne and Mr. Fox secretaries of state, Lord Camden president of the council, the duke of Grafton privy seal, Lord John Cavendish chancellor of the exchequer, Admiral (now created lord) Keppel first commissioner of the admiralty, General Conway commander in chief of the forces. The duke of Richmond was made master-general of the ordnance, Lord Thurlow was continued lord high chancellor, Mr. Dunning was created Baron Ashburton, and appointed chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. The public measures for which the whig administration stipulated were said to be, peace with America; a reform in expenditure, on Mr. Burke's plan; the diminution of the influence of the crown, by the exclusion of contractors from the legislature, and of revenue officers from the power of voting at elections.

The house did not meet, on any business of actual importance, until the 8th of April, when the affairs of Ireland were abruptly introduced by Mr. Eden, the late secretary of Lord Carlisle, when that nobleman was viceroy of Ireland. It was thought singular that the secretary of a minister so averse to the wishes of the Irish should now act, as if to embarrass the new cabinet, on principles so opposite to those he had lately avowed. He had in fact travelled with the speed of a courier, on the first notice of a change of ministry, to anticipate the popularity of a measure which his former patrons had for ever violently opposed, the repeal of that act of George I. which asserted the right of the king and parliament of Britain to enact laws for the kingdom of Ireland. Respecting the independence of the Irish legislature, Mr. Fox assured the house that the most serious discussions had already taken place in the cabinet council, and

CHAP.
XVIII.

1782.

CHAP.
XVIII.

1782.

that, within twenty-four hours, the measures in contemplation would be submitted to the house. By threatening Mr. Eden with a vote of censure for forcing a measure of such importance on their notice in so precipitate a manner, the house prevailed on that gentleman to withdraw his motion; and on the following day, the royal message to both houses announced, as Mr. Fox had promised, the intended project of redressing the grievances of the Irish nation. Mr. Eden, disappointed in his mock pretensions to popularity, after so lately and so diligently serving the cause of those who had discouraged the emancipation of Ireland, set off for that kingdom, with the probable view of misrepresenting the affair, and gaining credit for his own disappointment. Mr. Fox, however, aware of his intention, dispatched Colonel Fitzpatrick, so as to anticipate his arrival, who waited on the new lord-lieutenant on the 14th; and on the 15th a royal message, similar to that which was delivered in England, reached the Irish legislature. On this occasion the Irish house of commons, at the instance of the celebrated Grattan, passed an address to the throne, which included a full and express declaration of the rights of Ireland. It asserted the entire independence of their own legislature, and insisted on a mutiny bill more consistent with their national liberty. Justice and policy equally seconded the views of the Irish on this occasion. The obnoxious acts of parliament were immediately repealed; the whole powers of the Irish government, executive and legislative, were vested solely in the king, lords, and commons, of Ireland; the controuling powers of the English parliament, and the practice of altering bills in the privy council, were renounced for ever; a mutiny bill was enacted, limited in its duration to two years.*

While measures were thus happily pursuing for

restoring order and satisfaction in the sister kingdom, administration were also occupied in recurring to those plans of economy and reformation at home, which their efforts to obtain, at a former period, had so deservedly gained them celebrity. The bills for disqualifying revenue officers from voting at elections, and contractors from sitting in parliament, passed the lower house, after a feeble opposition. In the house of lords they were more strenuously combated by the lords Thurlow and Mansfield; but at length were carried by large majorities, and gained the royal assent.

Mr. Burke's economical bill was introduced to the notice of the house, by a message from the throne. It came with all the splendour of royal encouragement, and was moved by Mr. Burke with all the symptoms of patriotic exultation. It reached but a small part of the retrenchments which the nation had been taught to expect that it would embrace. It served, however, even in its altered state, to abolish a number of useless offices, formerly held by members of parliament, and to prevent an arrear of debt accruing on the civil list, by an annual saving of £72,368. The bill was followed by another, to prevent the accumulation of balances in the hands of the paymaster-general. On the 23^d of May, Mr. Wilkes made his annual motion for the repeal of the famous resolution of 1769, respecting the Middlesex election, and at last succeeded in obtaining a vote, that it should be expunged from the records of the house.

May.

The two committees on Indian affairs, the secret and the select, continued to sit during this session. Their reports were voluminous, comprehensive, and universally allowed to be drawn up with great ability. On the ground of the reports brought up from the secret committee, the lord advocate of Scotland, Mr. Dundas, who was the chairman of

CHAP.
XVIII.

1782.

that body, moved one hundred and eleven resolutions. These were divided into classes, each of which consisted of three distinct heads; the two first of a public and general nature, the third of personal culpability. The first class regarded the general system of our government in the east; it contained a prohibitory condemnation of offensive war, and all schemes of conquest in India; and concluded with a censure on the conduct of Warren Hastings, esquire, the governor-general in Bengal, and W. Hornsby, esquire, president of the council in Bombay, declaring the necessity for their immediate recall. The second and third classes related to the affairs of the Carnatic; and on these a bill of pains and penalties was passed on Sir Thomas Rumbold, for crimes of mal-administration committed in that province; and Peter Perring, esquire, for similar offences. The reports of the select committee had not advanced to the same state of forwardness. The resolutions moved by their chairman, General Smith, were only ten in number; of these, the three first were to censure the conduct of Mr. Sullivan, the chairman of the court of directors, for his neglect of duty, in delaying to transmit the act for the regulation of the company, to their servants in India, by which the regulation of the judicature, and the relief of the native judges, who had been harshly imprisoned, were unhappily frustrated. A censure was also passed on Mr. Sullivan, for administering an oath of secrecy to one of the secretaries of the company, restraining him from giving information to the committee. The next three related to the appointment of Sir Elijah Impey, by Mr. Hastings, to an office held at the will of the governor-general, contrary to an act of his present majesty's reign; and a resolution was agreed to by the house, for requesting his majesty to recal the obnoxious nominee. The two last

resolutions were to ascertain the power of the governor-general and council of Bengal, by a special act, and to reduce into one act the various regulations of the company, amended and explained.

CHAP.
XVIII.

1782.

The public mind had been long agitated by the important question of parliamentary reform; and the societies for that object had become general and numerous. The subject was again introduced into parliament by Mr. Pitt; but the insuperable difficulties which had occurred in bringing the friends of reformation to any specific proposition, induced him to vary the application in the present instance, and to move that a committee should be appointed to report their sentiments on the subject of parliamentary representation. The eloquence of this distinguished statesman was for many days of this inquiry employed in displaying the enormity of those abuses which it was his object to reform in the representative branch of the constitution. Among innumerable cases of corruption, he stated one instance of corrupt influence, which of itself might form a motto for the cause of reformation; it was the influence of the Nabob of Arcot, who was notoriously known to possess no less than eight votes in the house of commons.

May 7.

The motion for inquiry was ably supported by Sir George Saville, Mr. Fox, and Mr. Sheridan; but the whigs were in this instance divided in opinion. Mr. Burke, Mr. Thomas Pitt, Mr. Powys, and others, contended, that the ends of legislature were as sufficiently answered at present, as they could be by any new modification of electoral franchises; and that experience had ever shewn the impolicy of innovation, where the evil was not enormous, and where the fruits of change were not certain. The motion was rejected by a majority of 40 votes. The commission for examining public accounts soon after laid before the house a statement of the

CHAP.
XVIII.

1782

late public expenditure. It exhibited in detail innumerable abuses in that department, which had crept into custom, and were yet to be pruned from the list of national grievances. The lateness of the season, however, necessarily prevented the completion of many reformatations which the existing ministry had in view, and certainly would have effected, had the nation been fated to the continuance of a whig predominance. To prevent, however, these plans being neglected or forgotten, should any change of circumstances occur, and to mark at least their good intentions, if they should not be able to realize them, one of the leaders of the patriotic cabinet moved, in a committee of the whole house, a series of resolutions, importing the determined views of ministry to proceed with their plan of financial economy very early in the ensuing session. These resolutions related to the collection and consolidation of taxes, the abolition of useless offices, and the prevention of suspicious influence in official appointments. In turning from the view of those patriotic efforts at home, to the exertion of our national energies abroad, we are led, after a few adverse events, to the brightest period of the war.

Sir Harry Clinton, who resigned the command of the American army before the end of the year, was succeeded by Sir Guy Carleton. The fate of Cornwallis, and the news of the state of parties at home, kept the hostile armies in America without a motive to attack each other, from the obvious expectation that peace was not distant. The Spaniards, embarking from Cuba, invaded and took from us the Bahama islands, which had been left in no posture of security, and contained only about 200 defenders. Nevis and Montserrat, as we have already seen, had followed the fate of St. Christopher; so that of all our West-India possessions,

only Jamaica, Barbadoes, and Antigua remained, at the close of Lord North's administration.

CHAP.
XVIII.

1789.

Jamaica, the great object of Spanish ambition, was now to be attempted by the count de Grasse, who was to be joined by a Spanish fleet and army for that purpose. At Cuba and Hispaniola, the Spaniards had already 26 ships of the line, and a strong military force. The fleets, by combining, would have amounted to 60 ships of the line, and 20,000 land troops, independent of De Guichen's expected reinforcement of ships and soldiers. The British force in Jamaica, consisting of a faithful militia, and six British battalions of the line, amounted in all to 6000 or 7000 men. From a fleet, so far outnumbered, they had little defence to expect. Their chief confidence was in the strength of many posts in the islands, and the zeal of the inhabitants, who, believing the current rumour, that a change of proprietors was to follow the conquest of the island, were resolved on a desperate defence. In this anxious state of suspense, the happy intelligence arrived, that De Guichen's fleet and convoy, after their encounter with Admiral Kempenfeldt, had been obliged to return to France, and that only two of their whole number could join De Grasse.

By the arrival of Sir George Rodney, with 12 ships of the line, and his junction with Admiral Hood, the number of our grand fleet, under the former commander, now amounted to 33; and by the coming in of another squadron soon after, to 36 line-of-battle ships. De Grasse, with 34 sail of the line, was solely anxious to join the Spaniards, while Rodney's success, and the salvation of our West-Indies, depended on preventing that junction. On the 8th of April, De Grasse weighed from Fort Royal in Martinique, for Hispaniola. By noon of the same day (so quick was the intelligence of the British), Rodney pursued him from Grosislet, in

February.

March.

April.

CHAP.
XVIII.

1782.

St. Lucia ; and by the dawn of next day, both fleets were ready for action off Dominique. It was nine, however, before the breeze could bear the van of our fleet into action, while the centre and rear lay becalmed. This circumstance tempted De Grasse to engage immediately. The van of the English, commanded by Sir S. Hood, was assailed, for more than an hour, by the superior force of the enemy ; but the centre and rear, under Rodney and Sir Francis Drake, at last coming up, and the French admiral perceiving the line fairly closed, lost all hopes of advantage ; and having the command of the wind, easily withdrew from action, though severely disabled in many of his ships. Some days after the engagement were spent by both sides in refitting. On the 11th, the French had got so far to the windward, as to weather Guadaloupe, and were scarcely seen from the topmasts of the English centre. About noon, however, the falling to leeward of two of their disabled vessels, occasioned so vigorous a pursuit by the British, that to save them, De Grasse was reluctantly brought to action.

The night, which prevented an immediate engagement, was passed in anxious preparation on both sides ; and at half past seven in the morning, the action was begun. The scene of action is described as a moderately large bason of water, lying between the islands of Guadaloupe, Dominique, the Saints, and Marigalante. The fleets met on opposite tacks ; but the wind was but faint. Our ships, as they came up, ranged slowly along the line, exchanging a close and terrible fire, which was chiefly formidable to the French, from the unerring precision of the British guns, and the number of men crowded in the vessels. About noon, Sir George Rodney, on board the Formidable, with his seconds, the Duke and the Namur, broke

through the enemy's line; and throwing out signals for the van to tack, wore round, so that the British gained the wind, and stood on the same tack with the enemy. This bold manoeuvre threw the French into confusion, and decided the day. The French van bore away to leeward, wishing to re-form their broken line; but this they were never able to accomplish. Sir Samuel Hood's division, which had been long becalmed, now coming up with their leading ships, completed the preponderance of our advantage. Still, however, the contest continued with violence during a long day. The French, though broken in their line, resisted in single encounters, and some of their ships fought for a while, even against double antagonists. The captain of the *Cæsar*, a French 74, nailed his colours to the mast. His death, and the total wreck of his vessel, finished the contest of this ship with Captain Inglefield, of the *Centaur*. The *Diadem*, another French 74, went down by a single broadside of a British vessel. Towards evening, Captain Cornwallis, of the *Canada*, having compelled the *Hector*, an enemy's ship of equal force, to surrender, assailed the admiral's ship, the *Ville-de-Paris*, which in two hours he reduced to a wreck. Still De Grasse disdained to surrender, till Sir Samuel Hood arriving in the *Barfleur*, the fire of the French admiral ceased; only three men, it is said, being left on the upper deck, of whom the admiral was one. When the firing of the *Ville-de-Paris* had ceased, the English called out to her, demanding why she did not strike? One of the survivors answered from the French ship—The admiral of France does not strike to any enemy; but you may come on board. This ship, the largest in the French, or perhaps in any service, bearing 120 guns, and built at the expense of £176,000 sterling, was then entered and taken.

CHAP.
XVIII.

1782.

Thirty-six chests of treasure were found on board. Night concluded the engagement. As it grew dark, the British admiral thought it necessary to collect the fleet, and secure the prizes. The enemy made off to leeward, in the greatest confusion, and were totally out of sight in the morning. The superiority of English ships and seamen in close fighting, was never more happily exemplified than on this day. The loss of the enemy in men was prodigious. Upwards of 3000 were wounded, drowned, or slain. The loss of the British amounted to 1050, including two distinguished officers, Captain Blair of the *Anson*, and Lord Robert Manners, the amiable and gallant son of the late marquis of Granby. When darkness prevented all farther pursuit, some of De Grasse's fleet escaped to the Dutch island of Curaçoa; but the greatest number, under the vice-admirals De Bougainville and De Vaudrevil, keeping in a body, made their way to Cape François. Within a few days, Sir Samuel Hood, proceeding in pursuit of the fugitives, came up with five sail of French vessels in the Mono passage, between Porto Rico and St. Domingo; and after several hours chase, the *Valiant* and *Magnificent*, of 74 guns each, took the *Jason* and *Caton*, two Frenchmen, of 65 guns, with two attendant frigates. The third frigate effected its escape. Thus, by one decisive blow, eight ships of the line were taken from the navy of France, along with all the stores, money, and artillery, which had been treasured up for the intended assault of the combined fleets on Jamaica. To that island Rodney now repaired, displaying to the rejoicing inhabitants, the trophies of *his* victory and of *their* deliverance.⁷

⁷ The scene of Rodney's arrival on the shore of Jamaica, amidst the festive gratulations of the people,

was a perfect triumph. It was not a little heightened by the sight of the tall admiral de Grasse, walking

Indeed, the fortune of this commander was as highly singular as his conduct was glorious, during the present war. Within little more than two years, he had given a severe blow to the French, the Spanish, and the Dutch navy, and taken an admiral of each nation. He had in that time added twelve line-of-battle ships, all taken from the enemy, to the British navy, and destroyed five more. Of these the *Ville-de-Paris* is said to be the only first-rate-man that had ever been taken and carried into port, by any commander of any nation. On his return to England, he was honoured with an English, and Sir Samuel Hood with an Irish peerage.

This period of success was also signalized by reduction of some Dutch forts on the coast of *Java*, by Captain Stirling, in the *Leander* of 50 guns. The artillery in the captured forts amounted in all to 124 pieces. The same nation sustained a loss in the east, of still greater importance, at the opening of the present year. On the 5th of January, the town of *Trincomalé*, in the valuable island of *Ceylon*, was reduced, by the spirited exertions of Sir Edward Hughes.

The defence of *Minorca*, during the present year, though the siege of that island terminated by its capture, may be still regarded as a defensive achievement worthy of the British arms. While the Spaniards were unprofitably engaged in their attempts on *Gibraltar*, they also undertook, in conjunction with the French, the conquest of this island. On the 20th of August, 16,000 of these allies, under the duke de *Crillon*, commenced the

at the side of his conqueror, who in the crowd of spectators expressed a little shrivelled old man. They expressed their wonder with least ceremony. The planters gazed in silence on the scene, crying out to De Grasse as he passed, in their broken English, whose name had so lately struck terror to their hearts. The negroes old man beat you so.

CHAP.
XVIII.
1782.

siege of St. Phillips, its principal fortress, which they soon cut off from all external supplies. The fortress was well supplied with provisions; but the single want of vegetables produced the scurvy, with its usual concomitants, the putrid fever and dysentery, to such a degree, that the garrison was speedily reduced from 2600 to a few hundred hands. Even with these diminished numbers, the brave defenders of the place made a successful sortie, and destroyed some magazines of the enemy; but the fatal malady still increasing, their numbers became at last insufficient even for a change of guard. The numerous sick, who were laid in vaults, their only defence from the shot and shells of the besiegers, could only be saved by fresh air; and the remaining group, who had still strength to do duty, could only be kept from disease and death by a speedy supply of wholesome provisions. Fortitude itself could do no more. The emaciated garrison, many of whom had actually dropt, from sickness, at their posts, rather than repair to the hospital, surrendered in such a plight as drew tears of pity and admiration from their conquerors, at the spectacle of piling their arms. The terms granted by Crillon were sufficiently honourable: indeed, the whole conduct of that nobleman, in his hour of success, was marked by extreme generosity.

For two years past, the Carnatic had been a scene of severe warfare between the company's forces and the armies of Hyder Ally and the Mahrattas. To defray the expences of those extraordinary efforts, which it was now necessary for the British presidencies to make in their own defence, the governor-general adopted a financial scheme, which had at least the merit of being immediately productive. The great zemindars of India, or native landholders, were, by the constitution of the Mogul

empire, tenants or tributaries to the great prince; for, in a government so despotic as that of the Mogul, it is evident that tenant and tributary must be the same; and the inferior zemindar stood in the same relation to the great zemindar, or rajah. By the treaty of 1764, our East-India company became possessed of the provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, and enjoyed, of consequence, the power over those places, of collecting revenues, and exercising authority, to the same amount as the zemindars of the Mogul had been accustomed to hold. The laws and usages of India were, however, to be the standard of our authority, and not those of England.

The country of Benares, lying up the country nearly 600 miles, to the north-west of Calcutta, a country where the Ganges, before it becomes too vast for health or satisfaction, beautifies and enriches with its waters, a country under the happiest influence of the heavens, and accounted, for its climate and soil, the Paradise of India, was a part of those extensive possessions which the misfortunes of the court of Delhi enabled Sujah Dowlah, the grand vizier of the empire, and the nabob of Oude, to secure to himself and his family. The rajah Balwart Sing, was tributary to Sujah Dowlah, for the country of Benares and its dependencies, at a certain stated tribute or rent. On the death of Bulwart Sing, his son, Cheyt Sing, succeeded the father in holding the zemindary, as the inferior of Sujah Dowlah. The new zemindar, indeed, owed his succession to the interference of the English, and paid a fine to the nabob of Oude on his inheritance. The nabob attempted afterwards to screw up his rent to a higher pitch, and to extort £125,000 more from him; but the English governor, Mr. Hastings, again interposed, and saved him from the payment, as from an act of injustice.

CHAP.
XVIII.

1782.

In 1775, the sovereignty of Benares was transferred to the company, by the successor of Sujah Dowlah in the nabobship of Oude. When Cheyt Sing had been the vassal of Sujah Dowlah, it appeared injustice in the eyes of Mr. Hastings to increase his tribute; but as soon as the sovereignty became our own, the principle which seemed to be the basis of our conduct was, that the rajah was only our tenant at will, and that it was his duty to submit, if we had demanded nine tenths of his revenue.

In the July of 1778, Rajah Cheyt Sing was required to pay, and reluctantly paid, five lacks of rupees, as an extraordinary subsidy for the maintenance of the war, during the current year. He was so slow in making good the next year's payment, that the governor found it necessary to send two battalions of sepoys to enforce it. The third year's subsidy was still drawn from him with difficulty, and not till after many delays and apologies, and affected protestations of extreme poverty. It was not to be expected, after such reluctant contributions, that he should accede with great dispatch to the next demand, which was to raise 2000 horse in defence of the British territories. These delays of the rajah, and the increasing confederacies of the native powers against us (in which governor Hastings suspected the prince of Benares to be secretly connected), induced the governor to enforce his demands by a personal interview. The prince met him on his frontiers with protestations of fidelity; but so little was the governor inclined to believe them, that he put him under arrest, and charged him openly with infidelity. The natives of Benares, seeing their sovereign degraded to captivity, rose upon his guards, and rescued him from their possession. The rajah fled an exile from his own dominions. Benares was treated like a coun-

try in rebellion; it was speedily subdued, and the immense riches of the rajah confiscated to the victors.

CHAP.
XVIII.

1782.

Mr. Hastings had also the strongest suspicions, that Rajah Sing's more immediate connections of conspiracy against the British, was with the dowager princesses of Oude, the mother and grandmother of the reigning prince. Upon the faith of those suspicions, and fortified by the advice of Sir Elijah Impey, Mr. Hastings confiscated the property of these women. A vast addition was thus made to the pecuniary resources of the country; and by the early strength which it afforded to the company, it seemed to check conspiracy in the bud. By the same means he was also enabled to secure the friendship of a most important ally, the warlike prince of the Mahrattas, Madagee Scindia, with whom a treaty, was concluded in October 1781.

After the reduction of Trincomalé, Sir Edward Hughes, returning to Madras with only six ships of the line, in an indifferent state of repair, received intelligence of Admiral Suffrein having appeared on the coast, with a superior force, and having made some considerable captures. In this critical state, the British commander was luckily reinforced by two line-of-battle ships, and a fifty; so that Suffrein, when he appeared, even with his formidable armament of 10 sail of the line, and a host of frigates, finding his antagonist stronger than expectation, after dropping anchor in sight of Sir Edward, suddenly stood out to sea, and avoided engaging. The British, however, gave chase, and succeeded in recapturing several prizes. An indecisive engagement ensued; after which, the British fleet stood for Trincomalé.

Before the middle of March, Sir Edward Hughes was enabled to revisit Madras, and to bring from

CHAP.
XV. III.

1782

thence a supply of stores, and a reinforcement of troops to Trincomalé, as well as to augment his own fleet by two additional ships of the line. On the 12th of April, a day so memorable in the west, Suffrein and Sir Edward Hughes again encountered, the former having 12, the latter 11 ships of the line. A most bloody battle was fought; but it was fairly drawn, as no ship was taken on either side, and the loss of both sides was nearly equal. The British had 574 men killed and wounded, the French 501. On the 5th of July, Suffrein again appeared before Negapatam, where Sir Edward Hughes then was. The British embraced the offer of battle, and both fleets came to close quarters next morning. Once more the event of a hard fought day failed to produce a victory to our flag; but the action might be regarded as somewhat more creditable than the former; for our loss was small, and a French 64 had actually struck to the Sultan, one of Hughes's fleet, when the vanquished, taking advantage of a gale that sprung up, treacherously fired into the British vessel, and made her escape. The French admiral suffered severely, and stood for Trincomalé, where he was unfortunately soon after reinforced, and enabled to capture the place, in spite of all the exertions of Hughes. It was not till the 20th of September that the latter commander was reinforced by the squadron of Sir Richard Bickerton, consisting of 5 ships of the line and 5000 land forces. He fought, however, on the 3^d of September, another engagement with Suffrein, against superior force, and obliged him, as on the last occasion, to save himself from capture, by taking to flight. No other naval transaction of importance occurred in the east, till the campaign of the ensuing summer of 1783, which was principally employed in the siege of Cuddalore. The English fleet in those quarters was at this pe-

1783.

riod reduced to a miserable state by the scurvy ; but Sir Edward Hughes did not decline a fifth and last contest with his old antagonist. The action, like those preceding it, was still indecisive, and produced no capture on either side.

CHAP.
XVIII.

1782.

But indecisive as those engagements were, they had no inconsiderable effect in foiling the efforts of the French towards co-operating with our native enemies of India by land. In the beginning of the year, the celebrated Hyder Ally was checked on the Malabar, for want of the expected exertions of the French. Tillichery, which his forces had invested almost from the commencement of the war, was effectually relieved by Major Abingdon ; and Sados, a distinguished general of his forces, was completely defeated.

Hyder revenged this repulse, by cutting off a select detachment of our army under Colonel Brathwaite, on the banks of the Coleroon, in the Carnatic. The assailants, on this occasion, were headed by Tippoo Saib, the son and heir of the Indian potentate, accompanied by a band of Frenchmen under M. Lally. Their numbers amounted to 20,000. The English forces were miserably slaughtered ; a very few escaped death, only to exchange it for the more wretched fate of captivity. By this disaster, the southern parts of the Carnatic were exposed ; and the arrival of a considerable body of French troops from the Mauritius, made the state of the English still more critical. These forces, joined by a numerous body from the Mysore country, besieged Cuddalore, and soon compelled it to capitulate. Hyder Ally, during this time, with the grand Indian army, watched the motions of Sir Eyre Coote. After the capture of Cuddalore, the native prince made an attempt upon Vandiwash ; but Hyder, avoiding an engagement, relinquished the siege, and retired to a strong position called

CHAP.

XVIII

1782.

Redhill. Here he was attacked, on the 2^d of June, by Sir Eyre Coote and defeated; but from want of cavalry, his fugitive army could not be pursued. By the battle of the 2^d of June, the discomfiture of Hyder's designs was in fact completed, though the victory was not locally decisive. This enterprising chief of Mysore, who, after rising to that dignity from a private station in life, had projected no less a scheme of ambition than to mount the throne of the Mogul empire, was forced to retire into the interior, and died some months afterwards at his own capital. Nearly about the same time, the constitution of Sir Eyre Coote, broken by the fatigues of warfare, obliged him to retire to Madras, and resign the command of the Indian army to Major-general Stuart.

In the close of 1782, Colonel Humberstone was dispatched with a body of troops to the Malabar coast, where he pursued for some time a successful career, till he arrived at Palacatcherry, where he was repulsed, and reduced to extreme danger. Tippoo Saib, pursuing him to Paniary, was only prevented from cutting off the British, by the vigorous defence of that place under Colonel Macleod. General Mathews, in the meantime, being dispatched from Bombay for Humberstone's relief, attacked and stormed the city of Onore, the capital of Bednore; and penetrating still farther into the enemy's country, pursued an unresisted career; but, from authentic documents, it appears that his progress was marked by cruelties in the conquered country, which tarnished the British name.

From Bednore, General Mathews proceeded to besiege Mangalore, which surrendered on the 9th of March 1783. The rapid successes of the British obliging Tippoo Saib to resume his natural activity, he marched with 100,000 men from the Carnatic, to recover Bednore. General Mathews,

with unjustifiable boldness, marched to meet this immense host, with a handful of men, when, as might have been foreseen, he was completely defeated. Flying to the fort of Bednore, he was soon after forced to capitulate, and committed, with his principal officers, on a charge of evading the articles of capitulation, to a prison of Tippoo's; from which they never came out alive. Mangalore, however, and several other strong holds of the British, resisted the mighty forces of Tippoo during the continuance of the war. After the death of Sir Eyre, which succeeded in the midst of these events, the new commander, General Stuart, invested the important fortress of Cuddalore, the siege and blockade of which continued till information of peace in Europe put a stop to hostilities in India.

CHAP.
XVIII.

1782.

During the short-lived administration of the year, a new impulse was given to our naval preparations, which had languished under the neglect of Lord Sandwich; and by the valour and vigilance of our naval officers, the combination of the allied fleets was prevented from producing its usually dreaded effects. Admiral Barrington, with 12 ships of the line, chased the French fleet off Ushant, and captured several transports and a number of troops. Captain Jarvis was knighted, for capturing, with a 74, a Frenchman of equal force; and his ship, bearing her prize homeward, made another valuable prize of a 64, laden with stores and treasure. Lord Howe, with 12 sail of the line, confined the Dutch in their own ports, and terrified them from the designs they had formed on our Baltic and northern trade. Returning from this station, his lordship had the arduous task of protecting our homeward-bound Jamaica trade; with this inferior force, opposed to the French fleet of De Guichen, and the Spanish fleet, amounting to one more than

May 29.

CHAP.
XVIII.

1782.

Aug. 29.

double his number. This formidable force again occupied the chops of the Channel, and captured 18 of our Quebec and Newfoundland traders; but the able tactics of Howe kept them at bay from any farther depredations on our coast. The events of the year exhibited no farther disasters, except what the unsparing visitation of the elements produced. On the 20th of June, some of the finest prizes of the glorious 12th of April, foundered on their homeward passage. To aggravate this misfortune, when Howe, after his meritorious cruize, had returned home, and was preparing a new equipment for the relief of Gibraltar, the Royal George, of 108 guns, which was destined for this service, and undergoing repairs, was unfortunately overset in harbour, by the rising of a sudden squall, and was instantly buried in the waves. In this ship, which had successively borne the flags of Hawke, of Kempenfeldt, and of Rodney, the second of these commanders went to the bottom, with all on board. A victualler, which lay alongside, was swallowed up in the vortex occasioned by the submersion of so large a body. Nearly 1000 individuals, consisting of sailors, women, and children, perished by this memorable and melancholy accident.

On the 11th of September, Lord Howe sailed for the relief of Gibraltar; but he did not arrive till the repulse of the enemy had been completed, and one of the most glorious sieges had been concluded, of which the history of modern Europe has to boast. The spirited sortie in 1781, by which Elliot had destroyed the chief advanced works of the assailants, did not discourage them from renewing their efforts. On the contrary, the siege seemed to commence from a new æra, and with redoubled zeal, when the duke de Crillon, with 20,000 French and Spanish troops, arriving from the conquest of Minorca, was appointed to the command

of the allied besiegers. Don Juan Moreno commanded the fleet, while M. de Arcon, one of the ablest engineers of France, was entrusted with the ordnance; and from his inventive genius, promised to organize new and irresistible means of destruction. The battering ships, constructed by this war-like inventor, were fortified on the side that was to face the garrison, with timbers, iron, cork, junk, and wetted hides, so many feet in thickness, as to be bomb-proof, and impenetrable even to cannon-shot. They were roofed also with bomb-proof netting and wet hides. The sides were interspersed with pipes of water, to extinguish the red-hot shot, as they might enter them. While ten of these batteries were to moor within half gun-shot from the walls of the garrison, other vessels, with screening for the troops, were to wait till the opportunity of landing should occur. Forty thousand troops, animated by the presence of the French nobility, and princes of the blood, who had come to share in the expected victory, filled the camp by land, while 47 ships of the allied line, with innumerable zebèques and gun-boats, covered the whole entry of the Mediterranean on the other element. The land batteries mounted 200 heavy ordnance, the battering-ships a still greater number. A garrison of 7000 men, with 96 pieces of artillery of every kind, was opposed to these mighty preparations; but the spirit of the troops, and the known effects of the red-hot balls (a mode of defence suggested by Sir Robert Boyd, of which the efficacy had already been partially proved), afforded an auspicious hope that the garrison would make a glorious resistance.

The preparations of the allies continued from June to September, accompanied with successive cannonadings, which the garrison answered with

CHAP.
XVIII.

1782.

less frequent, but more effective fire. On the 8th of September, some of the foremost works of the enemy were consumed, by the heated balls of the besieged. This precipitated the efforts of Crillon; he made a land assault, from the 9th to the 12th, with 170 of his largest guns; but to many thousand of his discharges, our troops returned only a few rounds, directed against the repairing parties. On the 12th, the combined fleets anchored between Orange grove and Algèras bay, and next morning the grand attack was begun.

Elliot suffered the enemy to choose their own distance, and to moor before the walls, before he opened his fire. At three-quarters after nine, the battering ships moored in order of battle, the nearest 900, the most remote 1100 or 1200 yards from the garrison. Their arrangement was accomplished in ten minutes. Four hundred of the heaviest artillery opened at one moment their discharges on the garrison. The British, directing their fire chiefly on the battering ships, beheld with uneasiness, for some time, that their heaviest shells rebounded from the roofs of those bulwarks, while 32-pound shot made no visible impression on their hulls. They redoubled their efforts, however, with such furious discharges of heated shot and carcasses, that symptoms of confusion and combustion were at last exhibited on board of the Spanish admiral's chief battering ship, which continued every hour to increase. A general disorder was seen in their line towards evening, and their fire slackened, and almost ceased before night. The garrison also reposed for a while from the fatigues of a laborious day. During the night, the rockets thrown by the enemy's ships, as signals of distress, the distant cries of lamentation, and the arrival of a floating wreck, with only 12 survivors, gave sufficient to-

kens of our success. An hour after midnight, the Spanish admiral's ship was in one blaze. Other conflagrations successively rising, enabled the garrison to renew their fire, and point with unerring precision. The approach of day, the calmness of the sea, and the abating fire of the garrison, at last gave an opportunity to Captain Curtis, with the marine brigade, to approach with his gun-boats, and flank the enemy. He succeeded in completing the destruction of the battering ships, and in the still more glorious object of saving great numbers of the hostile crews from a miserable death.⁵ The destruction of eight battering ships removed every alarm from the garrison, and hopes were entertained of saving two that remained, as trophies of victory; but of these one blew up, and the other could not be saved. The loss of the enemy was calculated at 2000; that of the garrison amounted, by the return, to 16 killed, and 68 wounded.

The sole hopes of the enemy, after such a scene of humiliating defeat and destruction, now rested on their naval exertions; and their fleet remained in the bay till the beginning of October, though it was known that Howe had been for some time at sea. On the night of the 10th of October, a storm arose, which dispersed the combined fleets, while the British remained entire and uninjured. The *S^t. Michael*, a fine new ship of the Spanish line, carrying 74 guns, with the Spanish admiral Don Juan Moreno on board, ran ashore at Gibraltar, and was captured, with all her crew. Next morning after the storm, Howe approached the garrison, and landed his stores. His fleet, consisting of 34 sail of the line, was for some days in sight of the ene-

⁵ Three hundred and forty-five of these men were saved by the exertions of the marine brigade.

CHAP.
XVIII.

1782.

my, whose number yet mustered 42; but though a partial action took place, they avoided coming to close quarters, and in the evening of the day of battle, retired. The British admiral returned home, after detaching a part of his fleet to the West-Indies.

CHAP. XIX.

Death of the marquis of Rockingham . . . Division among the surviving ministers of the cabinet . . . Resignation of the duke of Portland and Mr. Fox, and appointment of Lord Shelburne to the head of the ministry . . . Every idea of a separate peace rejected by the Americans . . . Ostensible mediation of Russia and the emperor of Germany . . . Negotiations for peace . . . Meeting of parliament on the 5th of December 1782 . . . Debates on the terms of peace.

THIS prosperous aspect of affairs, combining victory abroad, with a skilful and united administration at home, was unhappily of short duration. The event which produced this change was the death of the marquis of Rockingham, a nobleman whose character for every public and private virtue, though drawn by his ardent friend, has never been questioned by his enemies. ‘He possessed,’ (says Burke), ‘sound principles, enlargement of mind, clear and sagacious sense, and unshaken fortitude.’ His rank, his services, and conciliatory influence, had long rendered him the centre of union among the whigs. His decease occasioned a struggle for power, of which the evil consequences continued to be felt during the rest of the last century. The unrivalled talents of Fox pointed him out, to a great proportion of the nation, as the natural successor. His claims were unfortunately at variance with those of Lord Shelburne, founded on long experience, and on personal and political influence, to head that division of the whigs, who were most peculiarly attached to the views and the memory of the late Lord Chatham, and

CHAP.
XIX.

1782.

July 1.

CHAP.

XIX.

1782.

the more important alliance of Chatham's son. On what grounds the intentions of the court were so early suspected of partiality to the latter party, is not entirely known; but not many days after the late minister's death, Mr. Fox convened the Rockingham party, for the avowed purpose of opposing Lord Shelburne's appointment to the first official situation; and it was agreed at the meeting to solicit his majesty for the nomination of the duke of Portland. Mr. Fox, on his first arrival at the royal closet, heard of a different appointment. It is said too, that his recommendation of the new secretary of state was also refused. Mr. Fox, Lord John Cavendish, the duke of Portland, Mr. Burke, Mr. Sheridan, and the other leaders of the late Rockingham party, immediately resigned. Lord Grantham succeeded Mr. Fox; Mr. T. Townshend filled the office left vacant by Lord Shelburne; Mr. William Pitt was made chancellor of the exchequer; and Earl Temple succeeded the duke of Portland as viceroy of Ireland. The new administration had many amiable and some able supporters; but it wanted public confidence, and, saving the rising genius of Pitt, it was defective in parliamentary talents. Mr. Fox and his adherents attributed their resignation to a difference of opinion on the subject of an immediate declaration of American independence, Lord Shelburne having repeatedly declared, that the sun of England's glory would be set whenever parliament should declare America free. The whigs who still kept in power, General Conway, the duke of Richmond, and others, denied that any room had been given for secession by any intention on the part of Lord Shelburne's friends to depart from the principles which had brought the late ministry into power. It is not impossible that many members of the cabinet might have uttered this assertion, in the full consciousness of truth, without divining the real

views of Lord Shelburne. But, though this nobleman had uniformly declared himself averse to the independence of America, he took at last occasion, during a debate in the house of lords, to observe, that he now considered it as a necessary evil, to which the country must submit, for the sake of avoiding a greater. During the Rockingham administration, negotiations for peace had been continued, but proceeded slowly; nor was it till the subsequent change that definitive measures could be arranged. It may easily be imagined how much the two recent and dreadful blows which the enemy had sustained in the West Indies and Gibraltar contributed to shorten the duration of the war, and to dispose both of the Bourbon allies to admissible terms. The financial embarrassments of those powers, the commercial distresses of the Dutch, the protracted miseries of America, the discontents of the British nation, and the change of the British cabinet, left no doubt of sincerity in the mutual proposals for peace.

Every idea, however, of concluding a separate peace had been rejected by the Americans, as derogatory to the faith and gratitude which they owed to France. Resolutions from the general assemblies of Maryland, New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Virginia, were speedily issued, in which they declared, that a proposition from the enemy to all or any of the United States, for peace or truce, separate from their allies, was insidious and inadmissible.

While the Americans were thus anxious to display their public fidelity, two of the first powers in Europe, the empress of Russia and the emperor of Germany, were the ostensible mediators in this great business, although their influence in deciding the peace was more nominal than real.

Under the general circumstances of the contend-

CHAP.
XIX.

1782.

ing powers, the independence of America being granted on the side of England, there seemed to be no material impediment remaining to the restoration of tranquillity.

The Shelburne administration at last brought negotiations to a close. Mr. Grenville had been for sometime in Paris, to settle preliminaries. On his recall, which followed the dissolution of the Rockingham cabinet, Mr. Fitzherbert, the minister at Brussels, proceeded to Paris, being appointed, on the part of England, plenipotentiary to conclude a treaty of peace with the ministers of France, Spain, and Holland. Mr. Oswald, a British merchant, was likewise dispatched to the French metropolis, as commissioner from his Britannic majesty for treating of peace with John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, John Jay, and Henry Laurens, four of the commissioners appointed for the same purpose on the part of America.

The differences with the American states were much sooner settled than those with the European powers. On the 30th of November 1782, provisional articles between Britain and America were signed, which were to be inserted in, and to constitute a part of, a future treaty of peace, to be finally concluded between the parties when that between Great Britain and her European enemies should take place.

The summer parliamentary session terminated peaceably for the Shelburne ministry, and left them in full possession of their power, till at least the succeeding meeting of parliament. The king's speech at prorogation, on the 11th of July, touched only on the usual topics; and every allusion to the interior politics of the country was cautiously avoided.

Parliament met again on the 5th of December. His majesty's speech announced, that an end had

been put to the prosecution of offensive war in America. 'In thus,' said his majesty, 'admitting the separation of the colonies, by agreeing to provisional articles for declaring their independence, I have sacrificed every consideration of my own to the wishes and opinion of my people.' The recognition of American independence was not received in either house without severe animadversion. Mr. Fox censured ministers for having made the independence of America conditionally to depend on the conclusion of peace with France, instead of being absolute. A dispute on this subject, he informed the house, was the cause of his late resignation. Some time before his resignation, he said, that he had written, by the king's orders, to Mr. Grenville, then at Paris, to authorize him to offer to the American agents to recognize the independence of the United states in the first instance, and not to reserve it as a condition of peace. At the same time, an official letter, for the same purpose, was sent by the earl of Shelburne to Sir Guy Carleton in America. Mr. Fox, suspecting that this measure, though consented to in the cabinet, had not the entire approbation of some of his colleagues, had, in order to prevent any misconception, purposely chosen the most forcible expressions that the English language could supply, in writing to Mr. Grenville; and he confessed that his joy was so great, on finding that the earl of Shelburne, in the letter to Sir Guy Carleton, had repeated his very words, that he carried it immediately to the marquis of Rockingham, and told him, that their distrust and suspicions of that noble lord's intentions had been groundless, and were now done away.—'Judge then of my grief and astonishment,' said Mr. Fox, 'when, during the illness of my noble friend, another language was heard in the cabinet, and the noble earl and his

CHAP.
XIX.

1782.

friends began to consider the above letters as containing offers only of a conditional nature, to be recalled, if not accepted as the price of peace. Finding myself thus ensnared and betrayed, and all confidence destroyed, I quitted a situation, in which I found I could not remain either with honour or with safety.'

On the 18th of December, Mr. Fox moved, in the commons, that an humble address be presented to his majesty, that he would be graciously pleased to give directions for laying before the house copies of such parts of the provisional articles as related to the independence of America. On the part of the mover and supporters of the motion, it was not denied that the design of it was to induce parliament to come to an explicit acknowledgment of the independence of America; and this, it was argued, was the best policy we could adopt. To grant it, he said, as the price of peace, at the requisition of France, would be base and degrading. Should the French minister insult us with an offer of compensation, he should be told,—'We will not sell the independence of America to you, at any price; we will freely present her with that which you shall not procure her, offer what bargain you please.' The motion was at length rejected by a majority of unusual size, and both houses adjourned to the 21st of the following month.

Jan. 21.
1783.

On the day of meeting, after the recess, a motion was made in the house of commons for leave to bring in a bill for removing and preventing all doubts which had arisen, or might arise, concerning the exclusive rights of the parliament and courts of Ireland in matters of legislation and judicature; and for preventing any writ of error or appeal from any of his majesty's courts in that kingdom from being received and adjudged in any

of his majesty's courts in the kingdom of Great Britain. The bill passed into a law, without any formal opposition, but not without some pointed animadversions. The parliament of Ireland, it was objected, was, by the repeal of the law of George I, which had once bound her to dependence, virtually invested with full powers to regulate every domestic inconvenience, by acts of their own authority; and a bill of this nature, which they had passed, had received the royal assent. The officious interference of Britain, it was said, was similar to a profusion of expressions in private friendship, which never cemented friendship, but, by its nature, excited suspicion; so that, instead of increasing the confidence of Ireland by the present bill, we were much more likely to disturb it.

CHAP.
XIX.
1783.

The preliminary articles of peace between Great Britain and France, and between Great Britain and Spain, were signed at Versailles on the 20th of January; and, on the 27th, copies of the same, and of the provisional treaty with the states of America, were laid before both houses of parliament, and, after a short debate, were ordered to be printed.

The preliminaries of the peace of Versailles recognized the free and sovereign independence of the Thirteen United states, and the boundaries of the new republic were accurately defined.* The liberty of fishing on the coast of Newfoundland, and in the gulf of St. Laurence, was granted to them; but no privilege of drying their fish in any of his majesty's American dominions was allowed: and the navigation of the Mississippi was left entirely

* By the line of boundaries, all the back settlements, and the whole country between the Allegany mountains and the Mississippi, were ceded to the Americans. To the northward, the line of division was carried through the centre of the lakes; and, by that means, a participation of the fur trade was given to both countries, with a small advantage in favour of Great Britain, as it was well known that the best resources of the trade lay to the northward.

CHAP.
XIX.

1783

free to both nations. No provision or reversion was agreed to, on the side of the United provinces for the unhappy partizans of Britain, whose estates had been confiscated ; but congress recommended to the several legislatures of the states a revision of the laws of forfeiture, and a restitution of estates under certain conditions.

To France we ceded Tobago in the West Indies, the river of Senegal in Africa, with all its dependencies, and the island of Goree. We re-established the French in their right of fishing on the banks of Newfoundland, on the old footing, ceding along with it the islands of S^t. Pierre and Miquelon. We gave them back S^t. Lucia, in the West Indies ; and all their ancient establishments in Orissa and Bengal, in the East : also Fort Mahé, and the comptoir of Surat, with the privileges of trade. We gave liberty to draw a ditch, and drain the waters, round the fort of Chandernagore, and restored Pondicherry and Carical, under particular stipulations in favour of our trade. The articles in the treaty of Utrecht, relating to the demolition of Dunkirk, were done away. On our part, we regained Grenada, with its dependencies, S^t. Vincents, Dominica, S^t. Christophers, Nevis, and Montserrat ; and in Africa we retained possession of Fort James and the river Gambia.

Spain was allowed, by this treaty, to possess Minorca and East and West Florida. She guaranteed to us the right of cutting logwood in the bay of Honduras, and restored the settlement of Providence and the Bahama islands.

Such were the preliminaries, which were shortly to be delivered to the consideration of parliament ; but, before the debates on that subject could come on, an event in the state of parties occurred, much to the disadvantage of those who had sanctioned the terms. The indignation of Mr. Fox, as it was abundantly stronger against his former, but perfi-

dious, friend, the present minister, than against his long and avowed antagonist, Lord North; led him, in the choice of his partizans, to reject every proposal of the earl of Shelburne to return to an official situation; but he embraced, with willingness, the co-operation of Lord North to form a coalesced opposition. The effects of this unexpected union appeared very soon, in discussing the merits of the treaty of peace.

CHAP.
XIX.

1783.

The struggle of parties, as usual after a recess, commencing on the subject of his majesty's address, two amendments were proposed by members of the coalition, in the house of commons, and carried by a majority of 224 to 208. The first amendment was made by Lord John Cavendish, without commenting on the nature of the terms of peace. The tendency of his motion was to withhold all approbation of them until the house should have time to take them into serious consideration. The second was brought forward by Lord North, and related to the situation of his majesty's faithful adherents, the loyalists of America. The arguments for the peace were drawn by the other party from the weak and impoverished state of the national finances, from the merits of the articles themselves; whilst, along with those arguments, the most odious imputation was thrown on the motives of the new coalition. By the statements of Mr. Thomas Pitt, it was made to appear, that the national debt, funded and unfunded, amounted to upwards of £250,000,000, of which the annual interest was little short of £9,500,000. This interest, if added to the inevitable expence of the civil list, would amount to £14,793,137. The produce of our enormous taxes, was only £12,500,000; so that £2,300,000 remained to be raised by fresh burdens. The state of the navy was represented to be nearly as alarming as that of our finances, in spite of all the gigantic ex-

Feb. 17.

CHAP.
XIX.

1783.

pences incurred by its support. We had scarce 100 ships of the line to oppose against 140 of the French and Spaniards; and this was independent of the fleet of Holland, estimated at twenty-five. In the East, as well as the West Indies, our best efforts, it was said, could only avail in defensive warfare; and in our own seas, the fleets of Bourbon and Holland would, by the most probable calculation, double our own. The army was also described as equally inferior to the numbers of the enemy; it wanted a levy of 30,000 to complete its establishment.

From such a picture of affairs, it was easy for the defenders of present measures to infer the propriety of gaining breath, and recovering our strength, by a peace, of which the terms were sufficiently favourable, rather than to persist in another hopeless campaign, against the hostility of one half of Europe, and the armed neutrality of the rest.

This defence of the peace drew from Lord North and Mr. Fox the most severe scrutiny of the supposed necessities of the public, which had hurried its conclusion. Mr. Fox denied the danger of public bankruptcy, in the event of another campaign. Our resources might be low; but still the enemy's resources were lower. The late resistance of the states in Brittany to the will of the French monarch; the discontents of the whole of Spanish America, and the refusal of most of the provincial states of that continent to pay the last tax ordered to be levied by congress, assured us that the burdens of the enemy were not more cheerfully supported than our own. Lord Keppel, who had left his situation at the head of the admiralty, denied the statements of ministry respecting the navy. It consisted, the noble viscount asserted, of only sixteen ships of the line less than the united navies of France and Spain, and was far more effective.

As the forlorn state of our circumstances was denied, so the inference was rejected, that it was necessary to conclude peace upon any terms, or upon any other principle than that of mutual and equal restitution. But the restoration had been exclusively upon our side. In Africa, we had parted with every thing but one settlement on the Gambia. To France we had surrendered the islands of S^t. Pierre and Miquelon, and to Spain we yielded the island of Minorca, and the provinces of East and West Florida, all without a pretence of compensation. The importance of S^t. Lucia, which we had ceded without appearing to be conscious of its value, was proved by the cession of five conquered islands as an equivalent. Our restrictions on the fortifications of Dunkirk (it was contended by the same speakers) ought never to have been taken off; for, though France had never fortified that harbour during the present war, having learned by experience that she was to be compelled to destroy the works at the conclusion of a peace, yet, in future, we might seriously regret that we had not insisted on this long-established article of our treaties. To those extraordinary concessions, we had added the restoration of settlements and important privileges to the same enemy in India. The addition of territory to Pondicherry and Carical might be treated as a trifling matter; but it was not so in reality. Our concession with regard to Chandernagore would make that place a depôt for Frenchmen and the implements meant for our destruction, and would yield them a powerful post in the very centre of our government.

It was asked, if the trifling permission to cut logwood in the bay of Honduras, without any district allotted or defined to us, and the acquisition of the Bahama islands and the isle of Providence, was a fair equivalent for the cession of Minorca

CHAP.
XIX.

1783.

and the Floridas? The value of East Florida had been either ill understood, or designedly underrated. Possessing, in the bay of Tampa, one of the finest and healthiest harbours in the universe, it had become peculiarly important to us, since the loss of Georgia, of which the harbours would now no longer be open for the protection of our trade.

As a farther proof of the rashness of this exchange, an address lately presented by the provincial assembly of that country was read, in which, after setting forth their thriving situation, and expressing their abhorrence both of the rebellion in America, and of the Spanish government, they concluded with expressions of the strongest attachment to the house of Brunswick, under whose protection they remained, and wished to remain.

The necessity or policy of acknowledging the independence of America being admitted, it followed, that the United states were to be regarded, in forming a treaty, in the same view as any other power at war with Great Britain. At the period of the treaty, Great Britain possessed the strongest posts on the coast of North-America; all the back country and the river S^t. Laurence, the fur trade and fisheries, were entirely ours. But, in the provisional articles of the treaty, we had given up Charlestown, New-York, Long island, Penobscot, and all the back settlements. Twenty-five nations of Indians, our late allies against America, were handed over to the states, without a single condition being made for their security. By the line of boundaries to the northward, all our settlements, carrying places, and forts, on the lake, were gratuitously transferred to the states. Along with those settlements, the greater part, if not the whole, of the fur trade was also surrendered. The right of the fishery on the shores retained by Great Bri-

tain had been recognized, not ceded, to the Americans; but no right of approaching the shores of America was either ceded or recognized to the British. By another article, all the American artillery which we had taken was to be left behind; but no stipulation was made for the restitution of British artillery. Hostilities were to cease on our side immediately; but America might capture, proscribe, and confiscate, till she chose to ratify the definitive treaty. Two articles of cession (if they could be so called) on the side of congress were all the return that America was bound to make for peace and independence, for crowning her with benefits, and leaving our very arms, as trophies to her, behind us. Those articles were, the free navigation of the Mississippi, and the recommendation of the case of the loyalists from congress to the subordinate assemblies.

CHAP.
XIX.
1783.

Though last, not least, came the charge against ministers of having basely deserted the wretched loyalists of America. What had been stipulated in their favour? That an assembly of their triumphant enemies should recommend them to the mercy of the republicans. One year was to be allowed them to beg forgiveness of their irritated countrymen; to crave bread from those who had stripped them of their fortunes; to obtain, if they could, leave to repurchase estates, for which, it was known, they had no money to pay.

The vindication of ministers was managed with different degrees of success, according to the nature of each different part of this multifarious treaty. The necessity of making peace with America, even on the worst terms, was attributed to parliament, who had locked up the British sword in its scabbard, by a vote of last year, in which the war had been condemned. Our cessions, restorations, and equivalents, were separately justified, on

CHAP.

XIX.

1783.

the mixed or single grounds of policy and necessity. In defence of our terms with the French in India; Sir Henry Fletcher, an East-India company director, declared that the company had given them their consent and approbation. The rights of fishery in America, it was contended, were properly bestowed on the United states, as the Americans ought now, by the best maxims of liberal policy, to be regarded in the light of brothers, and not to be watched with the jealousy of rivals. To have prohibited their fisheries would have entailed the necessity of keeping a squadron incessantly on their shores. The line of boundaries granted to America was prescribed by nature and common sense; and the restriction of them must have renewed the war. The forts which had surrendered were described as of little use; and fortifications of greater strength could be easily and less expensively maintained in other parts. With regard to the loyalists of America, ministers declared that no negotiation could have drawn better terms from the American commissioners. If their countrymen should disobey the recommendation of congress, it must become (they said) a debt on our honour and humanity to sustain them. After a debate of unprecedented length, the amendments were carried against ministers, by a majority of sixteen, necessarily announcing the fall of the Shelburne administration.

The subject of the preliminaries produced similar debates in the upper house; but there the amendment proposed by Lord Carlisle, and concluding with a censure on the terms of peace, though supported by a number of distinguished speakers, was lost by a majority of thirteen.

On the 21st of February, Lord John Cavendish followed the late victory of his party, by moving a series of resolutions, of which the last, as the chief

in importance, occasioned the warmest debate. It was to vote, that the concessions granted to the adversaries of Great Britain were greater than they were entitled to, either from the actual state of their respective possessions, or from their comparative strength. On a division, this resolution was carried, by a majority of 207 to 190.

CHAP.
XIX.
1783.

In consequence of this decisive defeat, the earl of Shelburne resigned his office of first commissioner of the treasury; the chancellor of the exchequer, at the same time, declared in the house, that he held his place only till a successor should be appointed. A ministerial interregnum ensued, which lasted till the beginning of April. Various causes were assigned for the delay of ministerial appointments. They who wished to shift all the blame from the court, ascribed it to the jealousies still subsisting between the newly-allied parties, and the difficulty of adjusting their several pretensions. Others have supposed that the interval was employed in private intrigues with the individuals of different parties, and in an attempt to form an administration independent of the great leading connections. It was asserted by many, that, on the failure of this attempt, the influence possessed by the lord-high-chancellor Thurlow, whose dismissal was a point insisted on by the coalition, was the principal cause that retarded the new arrangement. But this delay did not well accord with the impatient wishes either of the coalition or of the nation.

On the 19th of March, Mr. Coke, member for Norfolk, gave notice, in the commons, that, if an administration should not be formed within a few days, he intended to make a motion in the house for addressing his majesty to adopt that measure. The king (it was supposed, in consequence of Mr. Coke's intimation) commanded the duke of Port-

CHAP.
XIX.

1782.

March 24.

land and Lord North to lay before him a new plan of ministerial arrangements. On the day fixed, Mr. Coke declined introducing his motion; but, on the 24th of the month, he brought the same subject before the house, and it was received with a general approbation sufficiently shewing the dislike that was entertained to suffer any longer the suspence and danger of such delays.

Although the subject of the coalition had been before started in debate, yet the attacks of the Shelburne party were, on this occasion, so severe, and the motives ascribed to the leaders of that union were so selfish and odious, as to draw from Mr. Fox and Lord North a renewed vindication of their conduct. Mr. Fox declared, that although, on the subject of the American war, he had differed from Lord North, yet, when that question was at rest, and when it was necessary for men of talents to unite in forming a solid administration, he had thought it his duty to heal up the feud which a difference of political opinions had created between them. He knew Lord North, in spite of all the disapprobation he had declared, as well as felt, for his conduct with respect to America, to be an honourable and sincere statesman; he wished his enmities to be perishable, but his friendships to be immortal; he saw nothing inconsistent with the highest maxims of public duty in leaguings with him heart and hand; and the force of their united friends, he trusted, might ensure a great and popular administration. Lord John Cavendish, in support of his honourable friend, avowed, with pride, that he had been one of those who had tried to snatch their country from the danger of fluctuating counsels, and compared the present coalition of parties to that of 1757, which had formed so peculiar an era in the strength and glory of Great Britain.

The motion of address for a new administration

being almost unanimously carried; his majesty returned a gracious and promising answer. A new administration was announced to the house on the 2^d of April, of which the following persons formed the cabinet council.—The duke of Portland first commissioner of the treasury, Lord North secretary of state for the home department, Mr. Fox secretary for the foreign department, Lord John Cavendish chancellor of the exchequer: Lord Kessel assumed the head of the admiralty, Lord Stormont was made president of the council, the earl of Carlisle privy seal. The great seal was put into commission. Lord Townsend was appointed master of the ordnance, Mr. Burke paymaster-general, and Mr. Charles Townsend treasurer of the navy; Mr. Fitzpatrick was made secretary at war, Mr. Wallace attorney-general, and Mr. Lee solicitor-general. The earl of Northington succeeded as lord-licutenant of Ireland.

CHAR.
XII.
1783.

The first object of parliamentary attention, after the accession of the new ministry, was to open a commercial intercourse with the states of America. The prohibitory acts, which had restrained that commerce, were therefore repealed, and a new act passed to remove the necessity of requiring manifestoes, or other documents, for the commercial purpose in view, as well as to lodge, for a limited time, in the king and council the power of making such other regulations as might be thought expedient.

On the 16th of April, the new chancellor of the exchequer brought forward the loan for the services of the current year. The sum borrowed amounted to £12,000,000. The loan was invested in three per cents. and the chancellor had taken the current price of stocks as the basis of the contract, which was then at sixty-seven; but he could obtain from the moneyed men no more than sixty-

CHAP.
XIX.

1783.

six and a half. The stocks, however, in a few days rose, and the premium to the lenders became exceedingly high. In the passage of the loan bill through the house, this circumstance was attributed to the chancellor as a matter of criminal charge. The lowness of the stocks at the time of their contract, was attributed to the machinations of the minister himself, who, it was said, had created it, that a subsequent rise might enrich his dependents. The chancellor of the exchequer repelled those unproved insinuations against his character with protestations of public fidelity, for which there is every reason to suppose that the house and the nation gave him credit. In defence of the loan, he shewed that only ten days had been given to arrange it, and to meet the pecuniary exigencies of the country. As neither proof nor probability of his being able to foresee the rise of stocks was substantiated, his character could be little affected by so vague an allegation.

May 7. On the 7th of May, Mr. Pitt made his promised motion for parliamentary reform, under three propositions,—1st, for the prevention of bribery and expence at elections; 2^d, for the punishing of bribery; and, 3^d, for additional representation. His project was somewhat contracted, upon mature reflection, from what he intended to have brought before parliament the preceding year. It was his intention, he said, only partially to repair, and by no means rebuild, the sacred pile of our constitution. This religious respect for the constitution, he said, had led him to abstain, in his plan of reformation, from the slightest violation of its primitive principles. The changes he proposed did not invade, he said, but recognized, the original spirit of our laws. The debate that ensued was less important than diffuse, and contained little matter that had not been adduced during the former

session. The reforming resolutions were rejected by a large majority.

CHAP.
XIX.

1783

The independence of judges, an object of at least as much practical importance as parliamentary reform, was urged in the house of lords by the duke of Richmond, on the 3^d of June, when he introduced a motion respecting the danger of the great seal being put into commission. The object of the noble mover was to place the situation of a judge above all influence of hope or fear that might interfere with his professional decisions; that their salaries should be all equal, and their seats permanent; and that government should have nothing to bestow on them when they had attained that dignity. He censured, with great severity, the political solecism of men acting both as judges and legislators; but his motion was strongly opposed, and finally negatived.

On the 23^d of June, a message from his majesty recommended to parliament the institution of a separate establishment for the prince of Wales, who this year became of age. Fifty thousand pounds per annum were accordingly settled on his royal highness, and £60,000 voted as a temporary aid.

About the same time, a bill was introduced by Lord John Cavendish, for abolishing certain offices in the exchequer, and relieving the nation partially from the expence of others which remained. The profits of the auditor were reduced from £7,000 to £4,000 per annum, and the salaries of subordinate officers diminished in proportion. The industry of the commissioners of public accounts had, previous to this time, discovered, in the midst of numerous abuses, a most fraudulent concealment of £48,000 by two subordinate officers in public trust, a Mr. Powel and a Mr. Bembridge. Their delinquency appeared so great, that Colonel Barré had dismissed them from employment. Mr.

CHAP.
XIX.

1783.

Burke, on succeeding to the paymaster's office, to the general astonishment of the public, restored them, and strongly defended them in parliament, alleging the purity of their former reputations to be a sufficient refutation of what he called unfounded accusations. It appears, however, that the good sense of Burke had either been grossly deluded, or, which is less easy to suppose, that he felt favour for known delinquents. The vote of parliament, which committed those culprits to their trial, and the decision of a court of law, which fined and imprisoned Bembridge, after Powel had fallen by his own hand, under the ignominy of conscious disgrace, stand as serious objections to the justice of Mr. Burke's vindication.

June 2.

Mr. Pitt, still assiduous in reform, brought in a bill, before the close of the session, for the regulation of public offices, and laid open a scene of waste and corruption which had pervaded those offices during many years. He mentioned those sales of offices, which had grown of late so shameless and notorious, and those illegal fees of office, extorted under the name of gifts, which he aptly denominated the wages of corruption. In the navy-office, the chief clerk had a salary of £250 per annum; but he received in gifts exactly ten times that amount. The secretaryship of the post-office was legally worth £600 a-year; its profits were £5,000. As instances of prodigal expenditure, and depredation on the public, he exhibited the annual expence of stationary-wares to the different offices, which amounted to £18,000 per annum. In the account of one year there was found the curious article of £340 for whip-cord. Mr. Pitt's bill, though severely opposed in the commons, effected its way to the lords, but was there rejected. On the 16th of July, the session was closed with the usual formalities.

Holland having acceded, under the influence of France, to agree to preliminaries with Great Britain, on the basis of mutual restitution, every difficulty in the road to peace was cleared away. The definitive treaties with France, Spain, and America, were executed on the 3^d of September. The definitive treaty with Holland was not signed till the year 1784. Its most important articles were, the surrender of Negapatam and its dependencies to Britain, and the restoration of Trincomalé to the Dutch. The imperial courts of Russia and Germany acceded to the peace, but, had no actual share in deciding its terms. Soon after the signature of the definitive treaty, the British troops evacuated Charlestown, New-York, and the few other remaining posts. Sir Guy Carleton was rewarded for his services with the peerage and title of Lord Dorchester.

CHAP.
XIX.
1783.

As the cold recommendation of the unfortunate American loyalists from congress to the states was no better attended to than had been predicted in parliament, their claims came to be considered by government, under the act passed last session, to the number of 2,000 or 3,000 heads of families. Two thirds of those claims were determined in England, the rest in Nova Scotia or Canada. The claims of such loyalists as had been deprived of their landed or personal estates amounted to the sum of £10,000,000 sterling, which, (with certain deductions, sufficiently moderate, considering the size of the demand), were paid by instalments, interest being always allowed on the capital. To those claimants, whose lost incomes had arisen from offices, professions, and trade, £120,000 were allowed, vested in life annuities, from £20 to £500 each.

Thus terminated the most inauspicious war in which Great Britain was ever engaged; and the

CHAP.
XIX.

1783.

country was now restored to the blessings of tranquillity, at a time when other quarters of the world were visited by danger or calamities.*

Parliament again assembled on the 11th of November. The consideration of East-India affairs was particularly recommended, in the royal address, to their attention. The addresses in both houses were voted without opposition. The hostilities of party were, however, commenced immediately after these had passed. Mr. Pitt arraigned the inconsistency of ministers for having thanked his majesty for the ratification of preliminaries censured in the very last session. Opposition also called upon the ministers to bring forward, without delay, some effective plan for the improvement of our possessions in the east. Mr. Fox acquainted the house, that he meant, on the 18th of the month, to bring forward an important motion on that subject. On that day accordingly, Mr. Fox moved the house for leave to introduce two bills; the first for vesting the management of the East-India company in the hands of certain commissioners; the second, for the better improvement of our territorial possessions and dependencies of India. To the latter of these bills there appeared but little objection, as its object was chiefly addressed to the relief of the native princes, and to their future protection against the encroachments of the company. The former, which has been distinguished by the name of Mr. Fox's East-India bill, excited, through the nation, the most violent ferment of opposition. The prevailing objects of this bill were, to annihilate the power of the court of directors, and to vest the government of the company, for the space of four years, in the hands

* This year was memorable for the renewed preparations for war the earthquakes of Calabria, and between Russia and the Porte.

of seven commissioners, with the assistance of nine directors, who were to be subordinate to the commissioners. These directors were also made subject to removal by the vote of five commissioners, or by the king, on application from either house of parliament. The commissioners were, in the first instance, to be named by parliament, and future vacancies were to be filled up by his majesty. The directors were to be chosen by the court of proprietors. The whole patronage of India appears, by this bill, to have been intended to be vested in the hands of the commissioners. When introduced into the commons, it excited a vehement discussion. The objections which were urged against it might be generally reduced to two leading points. It was censured, in the first place, as a wanton violation of chartered rights. Mr. Pitt, who stood forth on this occasion as the most formidable opponent of ministers, drew a strong distinction, on commenting on the first of these objections, between those charters of incorporate bodies which had originated in the caprice, the prodigality, or prepossessions, of a particular monarch, and those which were sanctioned by a deliberate act of a solemn legislature, on which the faith of a free parliament was irrevocably pledged. The charter of the India company, he maintained, was a fair purchase made from the public; an equal compact, for reciprocal advantages, between the proprietors and the nation at large. The second objection appeared to be still more serious. The bill, he maintained, was an infraction of the very principles of the constitution. By throwing the whole patronage of India into the hands of the commissioners, it would create a fourth estate in the realm; a new power in the nation, inconsistent with the nature of the government, independent of the power of the crown,

CHAP.
XIX.

1783.

which might carry a most destructive influence into the other branches of the legislature. The bill, it was urged, was as unnecessary as it was pernicious. Allowing that abuses and imperfections existed in the management of Indian affairs, still there was a check upon the company's power, lodged by act of parliament in the hands of his majesty's ministers. By the wholesome exercise of that power, by amending a few errors, and supplying a few defects, which were still acknowledged to remain, a better remedy might be found than demolishing the rights of a chartered incorporation. This bill, it was asserted, would create a new and unconstitutional power, a kind of fourth estate in the realm, which, by lodging, even for a few years, such enormous influence in the hands of a faction, might ultimately annihilate the best rights both of crown and constitution.

To the objection of abolishing charters, the framers of the bill replied, that of all charters there was only one inviolable, and that was the charter of natural rights and humanity. If millions of the inhabitants of India were oppressed (as could be clearly shewn from the reports of the committee) by an incorporated body of merchants pretending to manage an empire, to the management of which it was not even alleged that they were adequate, what comparison was to be drawn between the sacredness of that charter which the eternal laws of justice prescribed, and the charter of a few men, who, under the name of fair commerce; exercise the trade of blood and speculation.

In answer to the charge of raising up a new power, hostile and dangerous to the constitution, it was contended, that, if the Indian government was a fourth estate, that fourth estate had existed

since its first formation. It was not denied that the new commissioners would derive a certain degree of influence from the power vested in their hands. The only question was, since the power must be vested somewhere, whether it was not safest entrusted to those who were at present proposed? On the 8th of December, the bill passed the house of commons, on a close division of 208 to 202, and was next day carried to the lords.

CHAP.
XIX.
1783.

On the first reading of the bill in the upper house, the lords Temple and Thurlow, and the duke of Richmond, expressed, not disapprobation, but abhorrence of it. Lord Thurlow pronounced a profuse panegyric on Mr. Hastings, and the flourishing state of our possessions in India. The second reading was fixed for Monday the 15th of December.

In the meantime, rumours were circulated, with the greatest confidence, that his majesty had signified to earl Temple his most decided disapprobation of the India bills, and that a written note was put into his lordship's hands, signifying that those who should vote for them his majesty should account his enemies; 'and if lord Temple could put this communication in stronger words, he was empowered to do so.' The vote of the house of peers, on the 15th of December, gave an appearance of confirmation to these reports. Several lords, who had entrusted their proxies to the minister and his friends, withdrew them, only a few hours before the house met; and others, whose support was expected, voted with opposition. The question, on the second reading of the bill, was carried against ministers by a majority of 87 to 79.

Two proposals were immediately made, on the first meeting of the other house after this decision, to pass a censure on the conduct of those who

CHAP.
XIX.

1783.

should influence the decision of any bill, while it is pending in parliament, by a rumour of the king's dislike to it; and another to prevent a dissolution of parliament. They were both carried by the ministerial party, in spite of the manifold symptoms and rumours of their approaching dissolution.

On the 17th of December, the India bill was rejected, on the 3^d reading, by the lords, on a division of 95 to 76. At twelve o'clock on the following night, a messenger delivered to the two secretaries of state his majesty's orders, 'that they should deliver up the seals of their offices, and send them by the under secretaries, as a personal interview on the occasion would be disagreeable to his majesty.' The seals were immediately given by the king to Lord Temple, as secretary of state. His lordship, however, almost immediately resigned, on the plea that he was considered by the late ministry as peculiarly obnoxious, on account of the part he had taken. He wished, in his private capacity, and unprotected by the influence of office, to answer any charges that might be preferred against him. Notwithstanding this apparent desertion of the noble earl, the new administration was completed in the course of a few days. Mr. William Pitt was appointed first lord of the treasury and chancellor of the exchequer, and earl Gower president of the council. The seals were delivered to Lord Sydney, as secretary of state for the home department, and to the marquis of Caermarthen for the foreign. Lord Thurlow was appointed lord high chancellor, the duke of Portland lord privy seal, lord viscount Howe first lord of the admiralty, the duke of Richmond master-general of the ordnance. Mr. William Grenville and Lord Mulgrave succeeded Mr. Burke in the

pay-office, and Mr. Henry Dundas was created CHAP.
XIX.
1783.
treasurer of the navy.

The situation of the new ministry was singular, and indeed unprecedented since the revolution, being formed by the crown, in immediate opposition to the majority of the house of commons. From the strength of the dismissed party, it was therefore to be expected that the executive government would speedily resort to the only measure which could promise to diminish that strength, viz. the dissolution of the present parliament. In the committee, therefore, which was formed of the whole house, to examine the state of the nation, Mr. Fox's adherents carried the proposal to address his majesty on the subject of the rumoured dissolution. In answer to this address of the committee, his majesty was pleased to promise, that parliament should neither be prorogued nor dissolved. Previous to this address and answer, the passing of the land-tax bill had been deferred by the influence of the anti-ministerial majority, as a security against dissolution. When the house assembled, after the Christmas recess, the indefinite nature of the royal promise appeared still to leave a jealousy in the house that their dissolution was destined to take place as soon as the minister should receive a few necessary financial supplies. They resolved accordingly to protract that event as long as possible, and, by a vote on the 12th of January, prevented payments from being issued from the bank or the exchequer for the public service. As a farther tie on the hands of the executive, they also adjourned the mutiny bill till the 28th of the following month. By these successive exhibitions of their superior strength, the opposition were in hopes of terrifying the minister to a surrender. Every former ministerial minority having been regarded as the immediate forerunner of a change, it seemed to be

Dec. 24.

CHAP.
XIX.

1783

an energy almost audacious in the young and inexperienced Premier, unaided by any elder heads of either great genius or celebrity, to stand in defiance of parliamentary votes, and the whole weight and eminence of parliamentary talents. But the courage of Mr. Pitt was less extraordinary than it at first sight appears, if we consider the two props on which it certainly rested, the support of the crown, and the popularity which he inherited, along with his talents, from his illustrious father. From the former influence much was to be expected. If the first fear and novelty of parliamentary defeats could be overcome, there was little danger of not finding, in a subsequent parliament, (since the power of dissolution was still left as a resource), an abundant supply of those political adherents, whose principles or interest naturally lean to the support of a court. But, if the royal partiality did not raise this inferior cabinet to an equality with the great party which had been deposed, the evident bias of popular opinion did more; it gave it a decided superiority. Whatever defence may be made of the late measures of the coalition, however great and pure its object and motives, they were not judged to be so by a numerous party in the nation. The reconciliation of Fox and North did not reconcile their opposite adherents out of parliament, by any other community of principle than that of disapproving what they thought so incongruous an union. The principals in this political partnership could not transfer to each other, or bring together for their common support, that portion of public favour which had supported each of them singly. The coalition was loudly decried. It cannot be denied, that the greatest confidence which a nation ever reposed in the greatest statesman she ever possessed,³ was, for a while,

³ Mr. Fox

most fatally diminished. The clamours of an interested monopoly were added to those of the speculative politician. The India company, averse to that party who meant to have transferred the management of their affairs to the legislative council of the nation, heeded but a rival to Mr. Fox to give that rival preference. To the hands of Mr. Pitt they afterwards tamely resigned all that power which Mr. Fox had ever thought of transferring, with the same inconsistency that men in a panic rush into equal dangers with those which they are seeking to avoid. Against the diminished popularity of the coalition party, Mr. Pitt had to oppose his magnificent plans of reform, his rising reputation for financial knowledge, his own genius, and his father's memory. A minister thus popular, was singularly fortunate, in spite even of those formidable adversaries whom he had to encounter in the senate. Though his minorities in parliament still continued for a while, the general opinion of the country was soon displayed in addresses, expressive of confidence in the new cabinet; and the court, thus enjoying the triumph of holding the prerogative of nominating a minister in spite of parliamentary majorities, probably foresaw, through all the reforming principles of their new choice, a minister disposed to coalesce with their most important views. This supposition will appear the more probable, when we consider what was the very first important effort of Mr. Pitt, in the first session of his 'ministry.' The coalition faction were charged with ambitious views, in wishing to invest a committee of their own parliamentary nomination with the chief sway and influence over our Indian affairs. This power, it was said, would have made the parliament which possessed it omnipotent. That power Mr. Pitt, by the first exertion of his ministerial strength, added to the

CHAP.
XIX.
1782

influence of the crown; and by it he added more strength to the royal prerogative than all the ministers put together since our revolution.

On the 14th, Mr. Pitt moved for leave to bring in a bill for the better government and management of the East-India company. His scheme proposed the appointment of commissioners by his majesty for the entire management of India, of which board two members were to be the chancellor of the exchequer and the secretary of state for the home department. The East-India company directors were to be obedient to their controul; there was to be no appeal from them but to his majesty's council. The king was to have the power of nominating the chief officers of the company, or, in all instances, of disapproving of the nominees. No order of the proprietors was to controul the directors, after his majesty's approbation of any measure should be received. Mr. Fox contended, that the bill was inadequate to eradicate any mischief, and that it would only throw a mass of dangerous patronage into the crown. The bill provided no remedy but recal; and what remedy was recal, while the governor-general was to enjoy the same arbitrary power which had been proved to produce such enormous abuses! The ex-ministry were once more victorious on this question; and Mr. Pitt's India-bill was rejected by a majority of eight.* Mr. Fox then announced his intention of introducing another bill, on the same principles with his late one, but accommodated to the particular prejudices which had occasioned its rejection. The house seemed to receive the announce with great satisfaction; but some following events prevented the execution of his design.

In the committee on the state of the nation,

Lord Charles Spencer moved the house to declare, in decisive terms, that the continuance of the present ministry would be injurious to the interests of his majesty and his people. During the violence of the debate occasioned by a motion so peremptory, a respectable and moderate member, Mr. Powis, started the proposal of a new administration, on the broad basis of an union of parties. Mr. Pitt took no notice of the overture; but Mr. Fox declared, that until the present minister had made the *amende honorable* for retaining his situation in open defiance of the avowed sense of the commons and the principles of the constitution, he would never condescend to act with him. The resolution proposed by Mr. Powis was carried, by 205 against 184. In a subsequent debate on the state of the nation, a few days after, the call for coalition was renewed by a strong body of the landed representation. Mr. Pitt still declined an explanation, and the leaders of the coalition held the same language as before.

On the day of receiving his majesty's answer to the late address of parliament respecting their dissolution, the minister was interrogated, both on that subject, and on the extraordinary circumstance of his continuing in office after the late resolution of the commons against him. As to the promise of his majesty, he said, the royal word had indeed been pledged not to interrupt their meeting after their adjournment; but he saw not how it could be inferred that it was pledged farther. His majesty's promise was indefinite; and he saw no evil that could attend a speedy dissolution. With regard to his own continuance in office, he boldly avowed his opinion, that the immediate appointment or removal of a ministry did not rest with the house of commons; and it was his duty, he conceived, to remain in office till he saw some prospect of his

Jan. 26.

CHAP.
XIX.

1783.

place being taken up by a person more acceptable to all

In the meantime, the measure recommended by Mr. Powis was laudably pursued by a large and independent body of parliament. On the 26th of January, a meeting of nearly seventy members of the house of commons was held at the St. Albans tavern,⁵ where addresses were drawn up, and forwarded to the duke of Portland and Mr. Pitt, recommending an union of all the whigs, for the establishment of a solid and strong administration. But the refusal of the minister to resign, and of the duke of Portland to hold any interview with him until he should resign, thwarted the object of the society in its outset. A motion was made, in consequence of the disappointment, on the 2^d of February, declaring that the continuance of the present ministers in office was an obstacle to the forming a firm, efficient, extended, and united administration. This resolution was voted; but, by exhibiting a majority of only twenty-four on the side of opposition, it announced that their strength in parliament was already begun to decline.

Feb. 11.

On the 11th of the same month, Mr. Fox once more delivered his opinions in the house, on the subject of the much-wished-for reconciliation of parties, but protested against its taking place till due satisfaction had been offered to the house by the gentleman whose resignation had been so repeatedly and ineffectually demanded by the voice of the commons, lest a stain should remain on the honour of the house, and a precedent be established of holding their voice in contempt, which would reduce them to be worse than useless. The premier proudly adhered to his former declaration. With regard to the union, he confessed there might

⁵ *See Annual Register, year 1784, page 27.*

be persons with whom he never could coalesce, without abandoning consistency as far as he had hitherto held it sacred.

CHAP.
XIX.

1784.

This allusion called up Lord North, who, with the true spirit of noble concession, declared that his own pretensions to office should never be an obstacle to the great and useful object of an union. The house felt and applauded his lordship's generosity.

A message soon afterwards came from the minister to the duke of Portland, desiring his grace, by the command of his majesty, to confer with him (Mr. Pitt) for the purpose of forming a new administration, on a wide basis, and on fair and equal terms. The duke required that he might be permitted to construe this message as a virtual resignation on the part of Mr. Pitt, and that he might receive the command to meet Mr. Pitt from the king himself. Both of his requisitions were refused. On the 18th, Mr. Pitt informed the house, that his majesty had not thought proper to dismiss his ministers, and that they had not resigned. On the same day, the question respecting the postponing the supplies, after a vehement debate, left the chancellor of the exchequer once more in a minority; and two days after, another address for removal of ministers was voted by a majority of twenty-one.

The continuance of this resistance to ministers in the house of commons seemed to rouse all the opposite principle of the upper house; and they passed, at the instance of the earl of Effingham, two resolutions, expressing, at once, their decided disapprobation of the conduct of the commons, and their own determination to support the new minister, whose dignity they considered as identified with that of the crown. The commons, afraid of giving a pretext for an immediate dissolution, by

CHAP.
XIX.

1782.

coming to a quarrel with the peers, behaved with great forbearance under this attack, contenting themselves with appointing a committee to consider their late resolutions; a committee who justified the house, by declaring, on the strictest investigation of principles and precedents, that the house had only discharged its duty to the nation and posterity. His majesty's final answer to the address for a removal of his ministers was returned on the 4th of March. After acknowledging the right of his faithful commons to offer their advice, *on every proper occasion*, respecting the exercise of any branch of his prerogative, his majesty repeated the reason already given for retaining his present ministers, *viz.* that no charge or complaint, or specific objection, had been urged against them: and farther added, that if there were any such ground for their removal at present, it ought to be equally a reason for not admitting them to a share in any new administration. Within a few days, a remonstrance was voted by the commons, in reply to his majesty's speech, nearly similar to the former resolutions of the house on the same subject. The language of the remonstrance was strongly, but respectfully, couched; it avowed the deepest veneration for the constitutional prerogative of the throne, but denied that the right of continuing a minister, ~~in~~ direct opposition to the will of the house of commons, belonged to that prerogative. This remonstrance, however, was voted by the majority of one solitary vote.

During the progress of this important contest, the rising influence of the minister in parliament is to be traced in the decreasing majorities of his opponents, whilst his popularity in the nation at large is recorded in the numerous addresses in his favour from every quarter of the country. As the ranks of the coalition were speedily thinned by de-

section, though the consistency of their conduct was not changed, yet their measures became less daring, as their fortune seemed to subside. Though at first they had threatened the minister with the decisive measure of withholding the supplies, yet, before the 10th of March, all the supplies were regularly voted, to the amount of nearly ten millions; and on that day the mutiny bill passed without a division. No money, it is true, had been raised or appropriated to any specific services, with the exception of the land and malt tax bills; but it was believed that the voting of the supplies would be a sufficient justification to the ministry for issuing money for the necessary expenditure of government. On the 24th of March, the parliament was prorogued, and the day following it was dissolved by proclamation.

CHAP.
XIX.
1784.

CHAP. XX.

*Event of the elections . . . Ascendancy of the new ministry . . .
 First session of the new parliament . . . Commutation act
 . . . East-India bills . . . Second session . . . Debates on
 the Westminster election . . . on the nabob of Arcot's debts
 . . . Rejection of Mr. Pitt's bill of reform . . . Budget of
 the year . . . Commercial treaty with Ireland.*

CHAP.
XX.

1784.

THE event of the elections proved as fatal to the cause of the late ministry, as might have been anticipated from the support which the present cabinet enjoyed, from the coinciding wishes of the king and a great proportion of his people. So complete was the route of the coalition party, that nearly the whole number of members who lost their seats, amounting to 160, were the friends of either Mr. Fox or Lord North. Among the interests which, on this occasion, joined the court, that of the dissenters, and of the East-India company and their servants, were regarded as the most considerable.

On the 18th of May, when both houses were assembled with the usual forms, Mr. Cornwall was again elected to the chair of the house of commons. The royal address, after recommending to the notice of the house, as the chief objects of legislative care during the blessed era of peace, the maintenance of public credit and the support of established revenues, called their particular attention to the East-India company, with an earnest warning to regulate the concerns of that momentous body with due regard to the rights of every branch of the

constitution. The address of the commons conveyed a pointed panegyric on the late measure of his majesty in dissolving his parliament, and was fraught with unbounded panegyric on the worth and popularity of the new administration. These expressions were vainly combated by the opposing party. The influence of the minister in his new house was evinced by a majority of 168. Mr. Burke, not discouraged by this display of superior numbers, proposed still to remonstrate with the throne on the gross duplicity and arbitrary dismissal of the late parliament. He supported the remonstrance with a speech of great length and energy. No reply was made to his speech; but the question being put by the speaker, the motion was declared to be negatived.

On the 21st of June, the chancellor of the exchequer moved several resolutions, as the foundation of the act since known by the name of the commutation act. He stated to the house, that the illicit trade of the country had of late increased so rapidly, as to endanger almost the existence of every branch of the revenue, and more particularly that of tea. It had appeared before the committee on smuggling, that though the annual consumption of that article within the kingdom exceeded 12,000,000 of lbs., yet that the quantity which was legally sold, and productive of duty, did not exceed 5,500,000. The only remedy which Mr. Pitt could devise was to lower the duties on tea to so small an amount, as to make the profit on the illicit trade inadequate to the risk. It was well known, that in this trade the freight of weight, and insurance to the shore, was about twenty-five per cent. and the insurance on the inland carriage about ten per cent. more, in all thirty-five per cent. The duty on tea, as it then stood, was about fifty

CHAP.
XX.

1784.

per cent. ; so that the smuggler had an advantage over the fair dealer of fifteen per cent., as the voyage from England to the continent might be easily repeated four or five times in the year. He therefore proposed to reduce the duty on tea to £12:10 per cent. As this regulation would cause a deficiency in the revenue of £600,000 per annum, he proposed to supply it by the substitution of a tax on windows. This tax, he said, would not be felt as an additional burden, but ought to be considered as a welcome substitution, and would, in fact, prove favourable to the subject. A house, for instance, of nine windows, which would be rated at 10s. 6d. might be well supposed to consume in a year seven lbs. of tea, for which, by the established tax on tea, the housekeeper paid to government £1:5:10 as a duty. By the commutation he would therefore save 15s. 4d. The measure did not pass without warm opposition in both houses of parliament. It was denied to have any title to the name or principle of commutation, since tea, though an article of general use, was still a luxury ; but the admission of light into houses was indispensably necessary. The chief benefit of the measure, it was said, would accrue to the Chinese, or the India company ; but the ultimate effect of a wider consumption of tea would be, to drain the country of its wealth for an article which was bought with our money, and not our manufactures.

The next public measure of the minister demanded all the address and management he possessed.—Of two bills relating to the same subject, which he moved on this occasion, the first was to enable the East-India company to divide eight per cent. interest on their capital. By the sudden dissolution of the late parliament, the committee for inspecting their

affairs were prevented from making any progress in the business; and though the inquiry was resumed as early as possible in the present session, yet, before any report could be made, the house was reduced to the necessity of either authorizing the company to make a dividend, without being assured of their ability to do so, or endangering the company's credit by refusing their consent. All the disgraceful and dangerous circumstances of this dilemma, were urged by the late ministers against their successors, and as the best and safest extrication, they proposed to make the dividend six instead of eight per cent. It was admitted on all sides, that the affairs of the company were not in the most flourishing condition: it was stated, therefore, as an act of injustice to the public, that the company, whilst applying to parliament for pecuniary relief, should divide among themselves as much as in their most prosperous state, and that they should lay their distresses not on their own, but on the public shoulders. On the other side, it was urged in favour of the company, that there were grounds to suppose this dividend would not exceed their abilities, and that their distresses had not arisen from their own faults, but from the general calamity in which the late war had involved the country. The bill, as originally proposed, passed the commons without a division, and in the lords by a large majority. The second bill was to allow the company a farther respite of duties due to the exchequer, to enable them to accept of bills beyond the amount prescribed by former acts of parliament, and to establish their future dividend. These propositions gave rise to vigorous debates. With respect to authorizing the acceptance of bills, an objection was forcibly urged by Mr. Fox, which, if allowed any weight, could not fail in reason to overturn the proposal: parliament, he observed, having

CHAP.
XX.

1785.

a superintendant power over the company, and its consent being necessary to the acceptance of the bills in question, the public might well conclude, that the company were equal to the payment of those bills, if parliament should authorize their acceptance, and might thereby be induced to take them as good security ; but, as parliament was responsible for the public interests, it would be bound, in case of the company's insolvency, to see that no one suffered from the effects of its partiality, negligence, or incapacity. This doctrine was treated by the movers of the bill as totally inadmissible,—by the act of 1773, (they said) the public became entitled to a certain share in the company's profits, after a dividend of eight per cent ; and, as a security for their share, the company were bound not to accept of bills beyond a certain amount, until that share was paid, without the consent of the commissioners of the treasury. When parliament, therefore, gives such consent, their consent amounts only to this, that the public, for the present, gives up the security it possessed for the payment of its share in the company's profits.

But the extreme inconsistency between the first and the third object of the bill was still held out by its antagonists, as obnoxious to censure. To support the first object, it would be necessary to shew, that the affairs of the company were in so deplorable a state, as to stand in need of every possible assistance. To justify the last object, it was required to prove that they were in so flourishing a condition as to afford an enormous dividend. The preference given by the minister to the company's interests over those of the public, under all the burdens of its taxes, was held out as an act of public injustice ; and the house was warned to resist the rapid strides with which the factions of Indian monopoly were advancing from their dominions in the

east, plundered from slaves, to purchase slaves at home, to over-rule the government-councils of the kingdom. After several divisions, the bill passed in both houses.

CHAP.
XX.
1785.

Another and more important act, to which the preceding was only subservient and preparatory, was also passed in this session. This was the renovated Indian bill, which was again, and successfully introduced, although its objects were still more extensive than when it last met with rejection. By the new bill, Mr. Pitt proposed to extend very considerably the powers of the board of controul, and even to allow them, in certain circumstances to transmit orders to India, without responsibility to the court of directors. The governor-general and council were also invested with larger discretionary powers, and many restrictions were laid on the patronage of the directors and company. Several clauses of the bill had for their object the prevention of iniquitous gains by the company's servants, who, under the name of presents, were in the habit of exacting contributions, or receiving bribes. The regulations respecting these, as well as for preventing offensive wars, and disobedience of orders, were copied from Mr. Fox's bill; but their effects were, in a great degree, made nugatory by concomitant limitations and exceptions. One severe regulation was, however, left unrestricted, which was to examine the servants of the company, on oath, respecting the amount of their property on returning from India, and to punish them by confiscation, if they were found to conceal it. But the most important feature of the bill was the institution of a new court of justice for the trial of East-Indian delinquents: this court was to consist of three judges, nominated by the chancery, court of king's bench, and common pleas, besides four peers and six members of the house of coun-

CHAP.
XX.

1785.

mons; the four peers were to be taken by lot from a list of twenty-six, which were to be chosen by ballot at the commencement of every session of parliament, and the six commoners out of a list of forty members chosen in the same manner. Liberty was to be given both to the party accused, and to the prosecutor to challenge a certain number of these arbitrators. The judgment of the court was made final, and to extend to fine, imprisonment, and incapacitating the convicted party from ever serving the company again. Mr. Fox pronounced at once the bill insufficient, insidious, and unconstitutional. It pretended (said he) to take a controul over the company without invading their charters; but it did invade their charters by the enlarged power of the board of controul; it attacked the prerogative of the company by stealth and by sap, not by open measures; yet it did not transfer that power to the proper channel, where all power that is taken away, ought to return, to the parliament of England, but drew the richest servants of the company into a dangerous dependence upon the crown. The new court of judicature was objected to as a deviation from the sacred right of the country, the trial by jury; and the investigation of private property, on oath, was declared to be grossly inquisitorial. The bill past both houses after frequent divisions, in which a large majority always attended the minister. On the 30th of June, Mr. Pitt opened the yearly budget: he stated that the ways and means fell just £6,000,000 short of the sum voted for the supplies, and this last sum he proposed to raise by loan. Instead of granting enormous profits on this loan to political favourites, he boasted of setting it up to the highest bidder. The terms were, that £99 : 19 : 2½ per cent. should be given to the tender of every £100; the rest was to be made up by a douceur of lottery tickets, which would

cost nothing to the public; six lottery tickets were to be the reward of every £100, and so on in that proportion. Of the unfunded debt, amounting to 12 millions, he proposed only to fund seven millions this year; so that for paying the interest of the loan, reducing the unfunded debt, and the four per cent. interest on that part of the unfunded debt which he still left, he would require little more than £900,000, which he expected the new taxes would produce, and leave a surplus of 30,000 in our favour. The new taxes were voted with slight opposition. After a humane and popular bill, introduced by Mr. Dundas, for restoring the estates forfeited in Scotland by the rebellion of 1745, the session closed on the 20th of August.

CHAP.
XX.
1785.

The second session of the new parliament was opened on the 25th of January 1785: their first attention was drawn to the controverted election of Westminster, of which the peculiar circumstances had, during the last session, occasioned a parliamentary remonstrance on the part of the rejected candidate, Mr. Fox. When the Westminster election was closed on the 17th of May 1784, the votes were in favour of Mr. Fox by a majority of 235. At the instance of Sir Cecil Wray, who imputed to his rival a number of false votes, the high bailiff had granted a scrutiny; but as that scrutiny did not take place till the following day, which was the day for the meeting of parliament, no return for Westminster took place. Mr. Fox protested on the spot against the proceedings of the high bailiff, and being chosen the representative of a Scottish borough, brought the case before parliament. The house

* The new taxes of the year were imposed on candles, bricks, hats, pleasure horses, British linnen and cottons, ribands, licences for selling beer and spirits, qualifications for shooting game, paper, hackney

coaches, silver-plate, exported lead, postages, and silk.

* He afterwards obtained considerable damages from the high bailiff in a court of law.

CHAP.

XX.

1785.

ordained that the scrutiny should proceed. It was found, however, in the course of the scrutiny, that there were many objectionable votes on the side of Sir Cecil Wray, as well as of Mr. Fox, so that nearly the same majority as at the close of the poll still remained in favour of the latter; they judged it, therefore, expedient to direct the high bailiff to make a return; and, on the following day, Mr. Fox was returned along with the other representative Lord Hood.

Among the numerous objects embraced by Mr. Pitt's Indian bill, was the consideration of an enormous debt owing to the company by their tributary prince in the Carnatic, the nabob of Arcot. These debts had been referred by Mr. Pitt's bill to the court of East-India directors: the directors prepared orders conformable to their authority; but their decision was over-ruled by the board of controul, who assigned a fund for the discharge of the nabob's debts from the revenues of the Carnatic. Mr. Fox protested in parliament, against this interference, which he considered as an act of usurpation; and described the mischievous consequences which the present act must produce to the interests of the Carnatic and of the India company. Mr. Dundas argued, on the other hand, that the power exercised was not usurpation, since the board of controul was empowered by parliament to originate and forward their orders to India. In the present case, he said, the board were only anxious to bring to an amicable adjustment a debt which it was but fair to settle, a debt, of which the specified claims were agreed on, between the debtor and creditor. Mr. Burke, in a copious and strong speech upon this question, ascribed the alleged debts of the nabob to a corrupt collusion with the servants of the company, and drew a dreadful picture of the frauds and oppressions exercised in British India;

but the motion of opposition was left in a minority.³

CHAP.
XX.

1785.

³ Mr. Burke, in his speech on the present occasion, which was one of the most brilliant he ever uttered, called the attention of the house to the nature and circumstances of the alleged debt, as well as to the persons by whom it was claimed. He began by stating, that since the establishment of the British power in India, Madras and its dependencies, which, before that time, were among the most flourishing territories of Asia, had wasted away under a gradual decline, in so much, that in the year 1779, not one merchant of eminence was to be found in the whole country. During this period of decay, near a million of money had been drawn from it annually by English gentlemen on their own private accounts. Besides this annual accumulation of wealth transmitted to Europe, it appeared that the nabob had contracted a debt with the company's servants to the amount of £888,000 sterling, which, in the year 1767, was settled at an interest of 10 per cent. About the same time, the court of directors were further informed, that one million sterling had been lent by British subjects to the merchants of Canton in China. In the year 1777, a second debt from the nabob of Arcot, amounting to £2,400,000 was settled at 12 per cent. interest; to this was added another, called the cavalry debt, of £160,000 at the same interest. The whole of these four capitals, amounting to £4,440,000 produced at their several rates, annuities amounting to £623,000 a-year, more than half of which stood chargeable to the public revenues of the Carnatic. As one proof among many, that these sums, if lent at all (and if not lent, the transaction was not a contract, but a fraud) was not property legally acquired, but spoil.

Mr. Burke quoted the following passage from a letter written by the nabob himself to the court of directors: 'Your servants have no trade in this country, neither do you pay them high wages; yet, in a few years, they return to England with many lacks of pagodas. How can you or I account for such immense fortunes acquired in so short a time, without any visible means of getting them?' Eitherway, therefore, Mr. Burke contended, if light enough could not be furnished to authorize a full condemnation of those demands, they ought to be left to the parties who best understood each others proceedings; and that it was not necessary the authority of government should interfere in favour of claims of which the very foundation was a defiance of that authority, and whose object was its entire subversion. But, said Mr. Burke, the gentlemen on the other side of the house, know as well as I do, and they dare not contradict me, that the nabob and his creditors are not adversaries, but collusive parties, and that the whole transaction is under false colours and false names. The litigation is not, nor ever has been, between their rapacity and his hoarded riches: no, it is between him and them combining, and confederating, on the one side, and the miserable inhabitants of a ruined country on the other. These are the real plaintiffs, and the real defendants, in this suit. Refusing a shilling from his hoards for the satisfaction of any lawful demand, the nabob of Arcot is always ready, nay, he eagerly and passionately contends for delivering up to these pretended creditors, his territories and his subjects. It is, therefore, not from treasuries and mines; but from the food of your unpaid armies, from the blood withheld from the veins,

CHAP.
XX.
1785.

The annual motion for parliamentary reform was early mentioned in the present session, and brought to a decision which silenced it for some

and whipt out of the backs of the most miserable of men, that we are to pamper extortion, usury, and speculation, under the false names of debtor and creditor. After these general observations on the debt, Mr. Burke proceeded to examine the grounds on which Mr. Dundas had endeavoured to justify them separately. The loan of 1767 he allowed to stand the fairest of the whole, and that whatever his suspicions might be concerning a part of it, he would convict it of no worse than the most enormous usury; but that the loans had been made with the knowledge of the company, or had their approbation, he positively denied, and proved from their own records, that the very reverse was the fact. With respect to the moderate interest which it was said to bear, he stated, from the nabob's own letter, the fact to be as follows: that the sum originally advanced bore an interest of 36 per cent.; that it was afterwards brought down to 25 per cent. and at length to 20; that there it remained, the interest being all along added to the principal, till by a regulation of the company, the sum consolidated was fixed at the rate of 10 per cent. On the whole, Mr. Burke expressed his doubts, whether for this debt of £288,000 the nabob of Arcot ever received £100,000 in real money. After some intermediate remarks on that part of the nabob's debt, which was called the cavalry debt, being raised for the payment of his troops, Mr. Burke proceeded to investigate the consolidated debt of 1777, and asserted, that though it had found a protector, it had not plausibility enough to find an advocate. If ever transaction required investigation, said the speaker, it is this:

the amount of the demand in different accounts, ran from £1,300,000 to £2,400,000 principal money. The proprietors had never appeared the same in any two lists handed about for their own particular purposes. In the year 1781, the agents of the creditors in the arrangements they proposed to make at Calcutta, were satisfied to have 25 per cent. at once struck off from the capital of a great part of this debt, and prayed to have a provision made for this reduced principal without any interest at all. They knew the nature of their claims too well to have hopes of being authorized by the voice of a British government to insist on them; but, said Mr. Burke, what corrupt men had not confidence to advance, the chancellor of the exchequer is hardy enough to propose for them, as he has told them they were too modest: he has replaced the 25 per cent. which they had abandoned in the terror of their conscience: he has added the whole growth of four years usury of 12 per cent. to the first overgrown capital, and has again grafted on this meliorated stock, a perpetual annuity of six per cent. to take place from the year 1781. Let no man talk of the decayed energies of nature: the acts and monuments of the records of speculation, the consolidated corruption of ages, the patterns of exemplary plunder in the heroic times of Roman iniquity, never equalled the gigantic corruption of this single act. Never did Nero, in all the insolent prodigality of despotism, deal out to his pretorian bands a donation fit to be named with the largess of the chancellor of the exchequer to his Indian sepoys. This enormous debt was to be raised from the country

years. On the motion for addressing his majesty, at the opening of the session, Lord Surrey pressed the minister to declare his intentions with re-

CHAP.
XX.

1785.

of the Carnatic. The state of that country, Mr. Burke described as one dreadful scene, which still wore the fresh and unhealed scars of warfare; all the accompanying vestiges of poverty, famine, and desolation. Such had been its devastated condition, that for tracts of hundreds of miles, the British armies on their marches, had not seen man, woman, child, or four-footed animal. to restore the country, it would require many years of rest. What would a virtuous ministry do to fill up this chasm of desolation? they would have set aside the justest payments, they would have drawn nothing from the vitals of such a country, till they had allowed all its producing parts to reanimate those which had been made unproductive: they would have proclaimed that on every country the first creditor is the plough; that this original claim supersedes every other. But, no, our ministry felt nothing for a land desolated by fire, sword, and famine, their sympathies took another direction: they were touched with pity for bribery, so long tormented with a fruitless itching of its palms. Their bowels yearned for usury, that had long missed the harvest of its returning months: they felt for speculation which had been for so many years raking in the dust of an empty treasury; they were melted into compassion for rapine and oppression, licking their dry parched bloody jaws. These were the objects of their care, the necessities for which they were studious to provide.

This country of the Carnatic, which was to yield the payment of those usuries, what were its resources? The whole net revenue, said Mr. Burke, amounted in 1782, to

no more than £480,000, nearly the precise sum which ministers had allotted for the emolument of their creatures, the private traitors. With regard to the public debt due to the company, no provision is made but an eventual surplus when the private creditors were appeased. Never, said he, was a public demand so shamefully postponed, or a private one made to supersede it, contrary to the practice of all laws and nations. He described the game which was played between the public and private creditors to the misery and oppression of the native Indians. The nabob falls into arrear to the company; the presidency presses for payment; the nabob's answer is, 'I have no money'—good; but there are soucars (money lenders) who will supply you on the mortgage of your territories. Then steps forward some Paul Benfield, and from his grateful compassion to the nabob, and regard to the company, unlocks the treasures of his virtuous industry, and for a consideration of 24 or 36 per cent. on a mortgage of the territorial revenue, becomes security to the company for the nabob's arrear. In consequence of this double game, the whole Carnatic has at one time or other, been covered by those locusts, the English soucars. During these operations, what a scene has that country produced! The usurious European assignee supersedes the nabob's native farmer of the revenue; the farmer flies to the nabob to claim his bargain, whilst his servants murmur for wages, and his soldiers mutiny for pay. The mortgage to the European assignee is then resumed, and the native farmer replaced. Replaced again to be removed on the new clamour of the European assignee. Every man of

CHAP.

XX.

1785.

spect to that plan of reformation, of which he had been the avowed patron, and objected to the king's speech for being obscure on that important subject. The chancellor of the exchequer gave for answer, that he had not been of opinion that the king's speech was a proper place for the introductory mention of any scheme of reformation. Great and wise men, he said, had entertained various conceptions of that important matter. It was the subject, of all others, nearest his heart; but, at this very early period of the session, to have stated it specifically was impossible. Much was still to do; his ideas were not matured. His plan comprehended a great variety of considerations; it related to the essentials and vitals of the constitution; it therefore required the most delicate attention. It was a path which he was determined to tread; but he knew with what tenderness and circumspection it became him to proceed. Lord North declared himself a determined enemy to any alteration of the constitution in so material a point as representation. In the course of his speech he ad-

rank and landed fortune being long since extinguished, the remaining miserable last cultivator who grows to the soil after having his back scored by the farmer, has it again slayed by the assignee; and is thus lashed from oppressor to oppressor, while a drop of blood remains, as the means of extorting a single grain of corn. Far from painting, he added, he did not reach the fact, or approach it. Their tyrannous exaction brought on servile concealment, and that again called forth tyrannous coercion, till at length nothing of humanity was left in the government, nor trace of integrity, spirit, or manliness in the people. The ministers, he observed, had thought fit to renew the company's old order against con-

tracting private debts in future. They begin by rewarding the violation of the ancient law, they then gravely re-enact provisions of which they had given bounties for the breach, and they conclude with positive directions for again contracting the debts which they have gravely forbid. They order the nabob to allot £480,000 a-year, as a fund for the debts before us. For the actual payment of this annuity, they order him to give soucars (bankers) security. These soucars are no other than the creditors themselves, who thus become creditors again on a new account, and receive an additional 24 per cent. for condescending to take the country in mortgage, and being security to themselves for themselves.

verted to a circular letter sent by Mr. Wyvil on that subject, which contained a statement, that Mr. Pitt had promised to exert his whole power, as a man and as a minister, honestly and boldly to carry a proposition of parliamentary reform. He asked the meaning of this antithesis of man and minister? Was it that the minister could do something more than the man could do; while, at the same time, the promise of acting boldly and honestly seemed to imply a suspicion that the minister would not accomplish so much as the man? He then reminded those gentlemen who had formerly voted against reform, of the disgrace they would incur by the inconsistency of now giving to the minister that support which they had denied to the man.

The chancellor of the exchequer rose again, to notice the quotation from Mr. Wyvil's letter. The letter, he said, was not his, and therefore he was not responsible for any phrases it might contain; but it was, to his mind, very clear, from the words as a minister and a man, what the gentleman meant to convey; namely, that in any situation, public or private, in office or out of office, he would give the proposition his full support. With respect to the words boldly and honestly, on which the noble lord had thrown so much sarcasm, he supposed that Lord North, from his own experience in office, was disposed to think it impossible for a minister to act boldly and honestly.

On the 18th of April, Mr. Pitt brought forward his long-purposed bill for reform of the representation, under a new shape and plan. He proposed to transfer the right of choosing representatives from thirty-six boroughs, which had already fallen, or were falling, into decay, to the counties and chief towns, which were at present unrepresented; that a fund

CHAP.
XX.

1785.

should be provided, for the purpose of giving to the owners and holders of the disfranchised boroughs an appreciated compensation for their property; that the taking this compensation should be a voluntary act of the proprietor, and, if not accepted at present, should be placed at compound interest until it became an irresistible temptation to such proprietors. He also meant to extend the right of voting for knights of the shire to copyholders, as well as freeholders. Such was the outline of his system, which was not entirely approved of by those who heartily supported the general cause of reform. Mr. Fox particularly objected to the plan of purchasing boroughs, though he willingly acceded to the transference of their rights of suffrage to places better entitled to possess them. The long and desultory debate which ensued on this motion introduced little more than the usual statement of argument on a subject familiar to the public mind. The bill of reform was lost by a majority of 248 against 174.

Previous to the opening of the budget for this year, Mr. Pitt called the attention of the house to a general review of the national finances. The whole of the public expenditure, including the interest of the public debt, with the probable expences of the peace establishment, he estimated at £14,600,000 per annum. To compare this yearly expenditure with the yearly income of the state, he proposed to examine the net produce of the taxes for the quarters ending on the 5th of January and the 5th of April 1784, and the produce of those ending the 5th of January and the 5th of April 1785. According to the increased produce of the taxes in these quarters, he made a variety of calculations on their probable amount for the whole year, which, by the lowest estimation, he

fixed at £12,000,000, and, by the highest, at £12,600,000. The land and malt tax, he expected, would add to this computed produce of the other taxes £2,450,000; so that, upwards of £14,500,000, being raised within the year, might enable us to lay aside nearly £1,000,000 for the purpose of a sinking fund, to defray the national debt; a project which he promised, on the following year, to lay before the house.

CHAP.
XX.
1785.

The aggregate amount of the supplies voted this year was stated by Mr. Pitt at £9,737,868. The ways and means, which had already been voted to provide for those supplies, including the computed growing produce of the sinking fund up to 10th of October next, the money still remaining in the exchequer, and what had been given in by the paymasters, left a deficiency of £1,000,000. This sum he proposed to borrow from the bank for £50,000 interest. A debt on the navy bills and ordnance debentures, amounting to £10,000,000, which had been left unfunded, and lay over from the last session, to be provided for in the present. The funding of this remainder would call for an income of £320,000. A tax on calicoes, yielding to the value of £40,000, was now to be repealed, and must be replaced; so that these three sums of £50,000, £40,000, and £320,000, in all £410,000, which was to fund the above debts in the five per cent. stocks, would require several new taxes. These taxes were passed with little opposition, except to two, which were extremely unpopular, one on servant maids, the other on retail shops.⁴

⁴ The new objects of taxation were, annual licences to coachmakers, certificates for killing game, retail shops, one shilling in the pound, house rents in different proportions; new four-wheeled carriages, and four-wheeled and two-wheeled carriages already kept; female servants; servants kept by bachelors; licences to attorneys; post-horses, gloves, and warrants of attorney.

CHAP.
XX.

1785.

A bill was introduced by Mr. Pitt, during this session, for the regulation and inspection of public offices throughout the kingdom. Commissioners were appointed to inquire into the fees, gratuities, perquisites, of such offices, which were at the time, or had lately been, received. By one of the amendments which this bill received before it passed the lords, the commissioners were subjected to the controul of the board of treasury.

If, at this favourable period of British peace and prosperity, we turn our attention from the more immediate interests of England to those of the sister island, we find, that although some years had now elapsed since the emancipation of her commerce, and the independence of her parliament, the commercial distresses of Ireland were still considerable. In 1780, the commerce of Ireland had been freed from many ruinous restrictions. In 1782, the declaratory act of George II was repealed; and, by another statute, which passed in the following year, the authority of the British parliament, in legislation and jurisdiction for Ireland, were formally renounced. The spirit of reforming the constitution by shorter parliaments, which became peculiarly strong in England during the year 1779, was speedily communicated to Ireland. In England, the partiality for schemes of reformation was never, at any period, so warm or sanguine as it prevailed in the minds of the Irish for many years after this era. In 1779, the addresses of the Irish parliament to the throne demanded, with a firm voice, the restoration of commercial freedom. The trading towns, at that period, adopted resolutions for preventing the importation of British manufactures, which they realized with a fury not to be restrained by the civil authority. The spirit of the parliament and people became identified in their objects; all new supplies

for the current service of the year were denied to the executive government, and the trust of the old revenue restricted. The right of passing the mutiny bill, formerly claimed by the British, was re-assumed by the Irish legislature. The first resistance, on the part of government, to these rapid strides of the Irish towards independence, was shewn when the popular party attempted to abolish the perpetuity of the mutiny bill, and to obtain a modification of Poyning's law. Both these motions were foiled by the votes of a majority of the Irish parliament, who were brought, by the influence of government, to favour the authority of England. The failure of these efforts drew together the celebrated convention of delegates from the Irish volunteers. On the 15th of February 1781, the representatives of 143 corps of volunteer troops assembled at Dungannon. Their resolutions, which were principally confined to the assertion of the political independence of the kingdom, were adopted, in substance, by the volunteers of the south. Sometime after these transactions, an attempt was made by government to supersede the necessity of the volunteer system, and to substitute in their stead the defence of fencible regiments. The design of government in this change of the national defence, though obvious to the Irish patriots, and universally unpopular, might have, in a short time, effected the object of its institution, if a new subject of political discussion had not been presented as a rallying point for the patriots, and a pretext for again assembling. This subject was the reform of parliamentary representation. On the 8th of September 1783, a general meeting of delegates from the province of Ulster was held at Dungannon; and, with the general consent of the volunteers of the other three provinces of Ireland, was appointed to be held off

CHAP.
XX.

1785.

the 10th of November following. This Irish convention, which was fully and respectably attended, resolved on addressing parliament for the purpose of reform, including, 1st, the farther extension of the right of voting among protestants, leaseholders, as well as freeholders, possessing property above forty shillings; 2^{dly}, the admission of those parishes to a right of voting which were adjacent to decayed boroughs; and, 3^{dly}, the limitation of parliaments to three years.

But the voice of the Irish parliament displayed a decided hostility to these popular sentiments, when they were brought before the house of commons by the popular orator Mr. Flood, in the shape of a bill for parliamentary reform. They would receive no propositions, they said, which were tendered at the point of the bayonet, and drawn up by an armed assembly. On the report of the fate of Mr. Flood's motion, the Irish delegates drew up a counter-address, in which they solemnly denied that their objects were connected with innovation, or at variance with the most sacred maintenance of the constitution. The change, which afterwards took place in the administration of both kingdoms gave fresh spirits to the petitioners. Under the auspices of two ministers, Mr. Pitt in England, and the duke of Rutland in Ireland, who had been so loud in the cause of reform, it seemed little to be dreaded that the cause would now misgive; but their hopes were not realized.

On the 13th of March 1784, Mr. Flood introduced his motion for reform, which was again rejected. These repeated defeats did not yet discourage the Irish reformers. On the 7th of June, in the same year, a very spirited address to their fellow-subjects, on the subjects of national grievances, was issued by the assembled citizens of Dublin, and the strongest exhortations held out to the

people of Ireland to persevere in constitutional measures for the acquisition of their common advantages. It was remarkable that, in this address, a proposition was made to admit the Roman catholic subjects to participate in the rights of suffrage at elections for parliament.

A petition to the throne, on the same subject, was framed by the citizens of Dublin, and an application was made to the lord-lieutenant to convey it to the foot of the throne. The lord-lieutenant returned for answer, that although it was his duty to convey the papers they presented, yet he found himself obliged to accompany them with his entire disapprobation, as they contained unjust reflections on the parliament of Ireland, intended to foment public dissensions. But the credulity of the Irish reformers was proof against all disapprobation. They could not be persuaded that the English minister would refuse his support to measures which he had once so ostentatiously patronized. On the 8th of July, the inhabitants of Belfast presented, through the medium of Mr. Pitt, their petition to the king, in substance nearly the same with that of their brethren in Dublin. Mr. Pitt informed them, in his answer, that he had undoubtedly been, and still continued to be, a zealous friend to parliamentary reform; but, he must beg leave to say, he had been so on grounds very different from those adopted in their petition; and that what was there proposed, he considered as tending to produce still greater evils than any of those which the friends of reform were desirous to remedy. After this period two national congresses met in Dublin, consisting of delegates from all the Irish friends of reform; but they could effect no change on the sentiments of the Irish parliament: and the promoters of the reforming conventions were exposed to prosecution by the exe-

CHAP.
XX.

1783.

cutive government, although the instances of punishment that were exhibited^s were more calculated to shew the power of punishing, than the determination to exercise it. By degrees, the cause of parliamentary reform in Ireland dwindled into neglect and insignificance. But grievances of a less speculative nature were, in the meantime, bearing hard on the people. The restitution of commercial freedom had been expected to operate in Ireland like a charm of instantaneous prosperity; but experience now shewed that something more was required, than the mere emancipation of trade, to remove the distresses of the lower orders. What those causes may be, which then were, and have long continued to be, productive of poverty and wretchedness among so large a class of a people distinguished for the physical, as well as moral, energies of their national character, it is not necessary here to inquire. The period we now mention was, however, unfortunately memorable for the distresses of their most populous and industrious towns. Towards the end of the year 1783, the distresses of the manufacturers of Dublin had arisen to such a height, as to reduce the capital, for a while, to a state of anarchy and confusion. The temporary remedy of a subscription for the unemployed poor was set on foot; and the legislature appointed a committee to examine into the possible means of promoting the better fortune of the manufacturers. On the 31st of March 1804, Mr. Gardiner, a distinguished Irish patriot, who took the lead in this business, proposed, in compliance with the wishes of the people, to impose what was called a protecting duty on certain imported manufactures of England; a duty which, by taxing English importations, might enable the Irish ma-

^s The sheriffs, who called the were fined in a few pounds, and county meeting for this purpose, imprisoned a week.

manufacturer to undersell the English dealer. The duties which he proposed to impose were, on English drapery, manufactured iron, paper, and other articles. The Irish house of commons, however, negatived Mr. Gardiner's proposal, and the popular ferment still continued. During the summer of 1785, Dublin and other parts of the kingdom exhibited incessant scenes of disorder. The expedient of non-importation agreements was adopted, with a zeal equal to what America had shewn on the very eve of its rebellion. These engagements spread over all Ireland; they received the sanction of several grand juries, and the merchants of the trading ports found themselves compelled to subscribe to them. The enforcing of the prohibitory compacts naturally devolved on the lower orders of the people, who proceeded in the execution of their trust according to the most approved modes of popular discipline. To appease this formidable spirit, the British ministry now found it necessary to interfere, with conciliatory proposals for a treaty of commerce between the two kingdoms, by which it was hoped that a reciprocity of advantage, and a peaceable accommodation of interests, might be established. As soon as the propositions of Mr. Pitt, to settle the trade of the two countries on principles of mutual advantage, had been favourably received by the Irish parliament, commissioners were appointed to adjust with the British ministry the terms of the proposed treaty. The business was opened, before the committee of the house of commons, by Mr. Pitt, who concluded his speech by moving, that concessions should be granted to Ireland, reducible to the following heads.—1st, the importation of the produce of our colonies in the West Indies and America, through Ireland into Great Britain;—2^d, a mutual exchange between the two countries, of

CHAP.
XX.

1785.

their respective productions and manufactures, on equal terms. In return for these concessions, he proposed that Ireland should agree to pay a certain stipulated yearly sum, out of her hereditary revenue, towards defraying the general expences of the empire. These primary propositions were introduced in March 1785 ; and, for three months after, the house continued to hear the petitions, or examine the evidence, of such merchants and manufacturers as were either called to give their evidence, or disposed to influence the opinions of the legislature by their voluntary representations. On the 12th of May, Mr. Pitt brought forward the plan of his commercial treaty, enlarged and considerably varied. Of twenty resolutions, which he moved that the house should pass on this subject, the chief objects of the additional propositions were to provide, 1st, that whatever navigation laws the British parliament should hereafter find it necessary to enact for the preservation of her marine, the same should be passed by the legislature of Ireland ; 2^d, that Ireland should be prevented from importing any other West-India merchandizes than those of our own colonies ; and, 3^d^{ly}, that she should be debarred from trading to any of the countries beyond the Cape of Good Hope, or the straits of Magellan, while the British East-India company should remain. The whole system of Mr. Pitt's plan was, by many of his political antagonists in the house of commons, decried as impolitic and irrational ; and the most vigorous opposition was maintained to some of its specific propositions. In objecting to the first clause, Mr. Fox challenged the minister to produce, in the whole history of mankind, an instance of such an agreement as was proposed, that an independent state should bind itself to do any thing unspecific and uncertain, at the arbitrary will of another,

This assumption, Mr. Fox contended, was a direct violation of the independence of the Irish legislature; it was purchasing Irish slavery, at the expense of English commerce. With respect to the last proposition, which was to allot the surplus that should remain over £656,000 of Irish revenue to the support of the British navy, it was sufficient to notice, that, without the infallible certainty of predicting, what no human being could pretend to predict, that the revenue of Ireland was to increase beyond all example, this provision for repaying Britain for her compensation was entirely nugatory, since the net revenue of Ireland was at present only £33,000, and its rise was a matter of conjecture at best, by no means of assurance. In spite of these objections, and the clamours of many mercantile bodies, who opposed the measure, for reasons of mere personal and selfish consideration, the partiality of the British parliament for the minister's commercial scheme induced them to sanction the bill; and it waited only for the decision of the Irish parliament to assume the shape of a law.

The Irish had, with great anxiety, awaited the decision of the British parliament respecting the terms of the treaty. On their arrival, the propositions were received in such a manner, as to shew the deepest disapprobation of those alterations which the original system had undergone. In the house of commons, when the bill of the English minister was introduced, the numbers of the Irish opposition grew to an unwonted height, in spite of all the influence of administration. The appearance of infringing on their legislative independence, the prospect of a perpetual disposition of the hereditary revenue, the surrender of commercial legislation, and the restraint of foreign trade, were considerations of so serious a nature, as to draw

CHAP.
XX.

1785.

back to the standard of independence many of the usual adherents of the government. On this question the talents of Grattan and Flood were drawn out in splendid rivalry, but in common hostility to the enslaving principles of the bill. After comparing the advantages which Ireland had already demanded and obtained from Britain, with the mighty sacrifices now required as compensations for insignificant grants, 'see,' said Mr. Flood, 'what you obtained without compensation; a colony trade, a free trade, the independency of your judges, the government of your army, the extension of the constitutional powers of your council, the restoration of the judicature of your lords, and the independency of your legislature. See now what you obtain by compensation; a covenant not to trade beyond the Cape of Good Hope and the Straits of Magellan; a covenant not to take foreign plantation produce, but as Great Britain shall permit; a covenant not to take certain produce of the United states of America, but as Great Britain shall permit; a covenant to make such acts of navigation as Great Britain shall prescribe; a covenant never to protect your own manufactures, never to guard the premium of those manufactures.'

In answer to these attacks, the chief speakers in defence of the bill⁶ insisted on the security and ample extent of trade granted by these propositions, the opening of the British markets to their manufactures, the drawback of duties, and the influx of British capital. The agreement of Ireland to bind herself to future and undefined enactments of the British legislature, it was argued, was no infringement of her independence, since it would be still in the power of the Irish parliament to re-

⁶ These were, Mr. Foster, the the provost of Trinity College, and Irish chancellor of the exchequer, Messrs. Hutchinson and Fitzgibbon.

nounce those laws, nay even to renounce the whole agreement, whenever she found it to be her wish or her interest. On dividing the house, there appeared for the bill 127, against it 108. A majority so small in favour of so important a measure was regarded by ministers as an actual defeat; and so many clamours and petitions against the bill overspread the Irish nation, that the British legislature thought it would be imprudent to push the business any farther. Thus terminated the intended commercial arrangement between Great Britain and Ireland, after having exercised the attention of both kingdoms upwards of seven months.

CHAP.
XX.

1785.

CHAP. XXI.

Third session of parliament duke of Richmond's fortification bill rejected Alteration of the mutiny bill Mr. Pitt's bill for the institution of the sinking fund Amendment by Mr. Fox Impeachment of Warren Hastings Mr. Dundas's bill for enlarging the powers of the governor-general of India Supplies of the year Prorogation of Parliament Attempt of Margaret Nicholson on the king's life.

CHAP
XXI

THE third session of this parliament was opened on the 24th of January 1786. The first important object that engaged their attention was a plan submitted by the duke of Richmond, master-general of the ordnance, for fortifying the dockyards of Portsmouth and Plymouth. A board of military and naval officers, and afterwards a council of engineers, had been appointed to give in their opinion, and estimate of this plan, during the preceding year. This estimate, amounting to no less than £760,097, was presented to the house on the 10th of February; and the subject was brought before the house in the form of a resolution, moved by the minister, to pass their approbation. Mr. Sheridan was the distinguished opponent of the scheme. He objected to it as unconstitutional, as dangerous to the liberties of the people, since, under the pretence of fortifying the country, it would place in the hands of the crown, not that limited and controulable force which the wisdom of our ancestors had ordained, in the bill of rights, to be entrusted, by short periods, to the

executive magistrate, but strong holds and fortresses for the perpetual maintenance of a standing army, independent of the will, and perhaps directly in opposition to the interests of the people. If ever the period should arrive (said Mr. Sheridan), and in the view of possibilities it is not to be neglected, that a monarch of England, misled by arbitrary principles and evil counsellors, should try to strengthen his hands by unconstitutional means, what engine could he find so easily subservient to despotism as a standing army, thus divided from the people by the walls of their garrisons, and disentangled from all those habits and circumstances which create a participation of liberal sentiments between the citizen and the soldier. He contradicted the assertion of the minister, that the present system of fortification would stop when Plymouth and Portsmouth should become secure. The shortest method of refuting this idea was simply to suppose the same board of officers acting under the same instructions, and deliberating under the same data, going a circuit round the coast of the kingdom, and reporting on the various places in their progress; would any one in that case deny that they must necessarily recommend a similar plan of defence, in proportion to the importance of every place which they visited? But the report of the board itself, Mr. Sheridan asserted, did not warrant the system. The board had decided hypothetically on certain data, which the master-general had proposed to them, but for the truth or probability of those data, the board had refused to be responsible. The noble mover of the bill' (said Mr. Sheridan) 'deserved the warmest panegyrics for the proofs of his genius as an engineer, which appeared in the planning and constructing of the report in question. The professional ability of the master-general shone conspi-

CHAP.
XXI.

1786

cuously there, as it would upon our coasts; he had made an argument of posts, and constructed his reasoning on principles of 'trigonometry as well as logic. There were certain detached data, like advanced works, to keep the enemy at a distance from the main object in debate; strong provisions covered the flanks of his assertions, his very queries were in casemates; no impression was, therefore, to be made on this fortress of sophistry, by desultory observations, and it was necessary to sit down before it, and assail it by regular approaches. It was fortunate, he said, however, to observe, that, notwithstanding all the skill employed by the noble and literary engineer, his mode of defence, on paper, was open to the same objection which had been urged against his other fortifications; that if his adversary got possession of one of his posts, it became strength against him, and the means of subduing the whole line of his argument.'

Lastly, he argued that the data themselves were founded upon a supposition of events so desperate, as would not only produce danger to Portsmouth and Plymouth, but the conquest of the whole island. Under the circumstances of the data, it was necessary to suppose the following circumstances: the absence of the British fleet from our coasts, for the space of three months, while an army of 30,000 or 40,000 men was ready on the enemy's coast to invade this island; that enemy to choose their point of landing, to land and encamp with heavy artillery, and every necessary for a siege, while no force could be collected, in less than two months, to oppose them.'

The victory of Mr. Sheridan on the fate of the duke of Richmond's bill, is an event, as, honourable to the talents of that speaker, as to the impartiality of parliament on a subject of great con-

stitutional importance. On the house dividing, the members appeared exactly equal ; the casting voice of the speaker decided against Mr. Pitt's resolution.

CHAP.

XXI.

1786.

To the mutiny bill this year, a clause was added, subjecting officers by brevet, though not in service, to its authority. This intention of the act, though not unprecedented, had been omitted for many years, from respect to the public jealousy of military law. The plea held up at present for alteration was, ' that officers, though receiving no pay from the crown, might eventually be entrusted with command ; and being capable of holding military authority, it was just that they should be also amenable to the laws of the service. Instances were even adduced, in which commanders, under the above description, had been called into actual service, and who were yet, by the defeat of later mutiny bills, incapable of being tried by court-martials. It was urged in objection to this contending clause, that as martial law, in any shape, was defensible only on the ground of necessity, it ought, in times of peace, rather to be narrowed than enlarged : the injustice of trying men by the laws of the army, who were but nominally attached to it, was also strongly urged ; and the grievance of subjecting individuals in civil life, to be punished for offences unknown and undescribed by the military act as it stood at present, but which his majesty had the power hereafter to create. Against all these objections, the framers of the clause persisted in carrying the bill through both houses.

In the business of this session, the minister's plan for reducing the national debt, holds a distinguished place, and indeed forms a designating era in the financial history of the country. The plan was founded on a report framed by a select committee, appointed early in the session,

CHAP.
XXI.

1786.

for examining the annual income and expenditure of the state.

By the report of the committee it appeared, that the annual income for the year 1785, had been £15,379,000; and the annual expenditure £14,478,000, leaving a surplus of £901,000; and that in the year 1786, the income had been £15,397,000; and the expenditure the same as in the preceding year, leaving a surplus of £901,000. This surplus the minister proposed to increase to one million, by means which he shewed the resources of the country to be perfectly capable of bearing; and to appropriate this yearly million most sacredly to the exclusive purpose of extinguishing the national debt. This sinking fund he proposed to be kept unalienable in any circumstances of the country. Commissioners of the highest respectability were to be chosen for the important service of purchasing in the funds, for the redemption of public debt: several savings of expence and increase of revenue, especially through the customs from the suppression of smuggling, and the reversion of many annuities, would fall into the same fund, which, in the course of twenty-eight years, might produce an annual revenue of four millions to the state. From this sketch of the sinking fund, accompanied by a copious exposition of the finances of the kingdom, the minister reduced his plan to the following summary heads:—First, that the yearly income of the state exceeded the permanent level of its expences by a sum of £900,000; next, that this sum could be increased to a million, by means nowise burdensome to the people; thirdly,

the commissioners were to be the governor and deputy governor of the bank of England, and the speaker of the House of commons, the chancellor of the exchequer, the master of the rolls, accountant-general of the high court of chancery.

that although the present establishment exceeded; in certain instances, the same establishment as stated in the report of the select committee; yet there were ample resources, sufficient to over-balance such excesses, without having recourse to fresh taxes; and lastly, that the ways and means of the present year would be sufficient to furnish the supplies, together with the sum of £250,000, to be applied quarterly towards the establishment of the new fund, and after all, would leave a considerable balance to be carried to the next year. Mr. Pitt concluded by moving, that the sum of one million be annually granted to certain commissioners, to be applied by them to the purchase of stocks, towards discharging the public debt of this country; which money shall arise out of the surplusses, excesses, and overplus monies, composing the fund, commonly called the sinking fund. The policy of the principle of liquidating the national debt being acknowledged on all sides, the motion was carried in the affirmative without a division.

The accuracy of the minister's calculations did not, however, pass undisputed, and the strongest objections were urged against the application of the fund being unalienable, so as to fetter the hands of future financiers, who might have occasion, from superior judgment, or a change of circumstances, to have recourse to the sinking fund instead of a loan. At once to obviate and support the last objection, Mr. Fox moved, that a clause should be inserted to empower the commissioners named in the bill, to accept so much of any future loan as they should have cash belonging to the public in their hands to pay for. Mr. Pitt received the clause with the strongest marks of approbation. Another clause, enabling the commissioners to continue purchasing stock for the public, when at or above par, unless

CHAP.

XXI.

1786

CHAP. otherwise directed by parliament, was moved by
XXI. Mr. Pulteney, and carried.

1786.

Of the many frauds that were committed on the revenue, Mr. Pitt, upon inquiry, found the illicit trade in wine was one of the most flagrant. A bill was therefore introduced, and passed into a law, subjecting foreign wines to the excise. Although it did not pass without objections, the measure was described, by the friends of administration, as advantageous both to the people and the treasury. By subjecting all foreign wines to the excise, the temptation to smuggling was diminished, and the practice of making fictitious wine, a practice still more pernicious than smuggling, was by the same means discouraged.

A bill, proposed by Mr. Crewe, and commonly known by his name, had been enacted under the last administration, by which the electing votes of custom, excise, post and stamp officers, had been set aside. Mr. Marsham proposed, this session, that a similar bill should extend to persons holding situations in the navy and ordnance offices. Mr. Pitt, who, in the true spirit of reformation, had supported Mr. Crewe's bill, resisted the present. If it should pass (said the minister) the whole corps of our naval artificers, deprived of their rights as Englishmen, might carry their skill and industry to a foreign market, and there is no maritime country that would not grant them their own terms. Mr. Fox successfully ridiculed the fear of disfranchised electors leaving our dock-yards for others that would allow them electioneering. They were to go abroad, he supposed, to have voices in the appointment of members of parliament in France, or were to influence the elections of Spain, or to take a share in the aristocracy of Holland. Mr. Marsham's motion was negatived by a majority of 117 to 76. A discussion was next intro-

pluced, which occupied the attention of parliament during the remaining part of the session, and while it engaged the curiosity of the public for several subsequent years, equally divided their opinions and their wishes respecting its issue. This was the trial of Warren Hastings, for alleged crimes and misdemeanours in his government of India. We have seen in the transactions of a former year, that the committee on Indian affairs found sufficient grounds, in the course of their inquiry, for recalling that gentleman from his high station, along with others who were implicated in his measures, and responsible for being his coadjutors. Mr. Hastings arrived in England in June 1785. To weigh with exactness the great mass of historical facts and events, on which the just decision of Hastings' character must be founded, is a task which not even the triteness of the subject has simplified or made easy. After his acquittal by the highest tribunal of his country, the admirers of Hastings are well warranted in a general vindication of his character; but that all his conduct was unsullied, that all the philippics of Burke were founded on falsehood and extravagance, is not to be presumed, when we consider that Mr. Dundas (though he reconciled the inconsistency of his conduct in defending him, by substituting an unintelligible distinction between the minor guilt that deserves suspension from office, and the greater guilt which merits prosecution), had been himself instrumental in procuring the governor-general's recal, and that Mr. Pitt, who is more to be regarded as his friend than his enemy, confessed his conduct to be impeachable on the grounds of one serious charge. To resist this momentous impeachment, animated by the talents of opposition, Mr. Hastings brought with him from India, a character, supported by the suffrages of almost all

CHAP.

XXI.

1786.

who had lived under his government, and the undisputed merit of having achieved (by whatever means he did achieve it) the salvation of our empire in the east from impending destruction, while the possessions of England, in every other quarter of the globe, had been torn from us, or left debilitated.

As the threats of impeachment had been held out by Mr. Burke during several past sessions, they were expected to be realized in the present. On the first day of the session, the secretary of Hastings, Major Scott, challenged his accuser to come forward and produce his charges. Mr. Burke answered by quoting the words of the duke of Parma on being challenged by Henry the IV of France, to come out openly and fight him, 'that he knew very well what he had to do, and had not come so far to be directed by an enemy.'

In opening the business, on the 17th of February, Mr. Burke gave his reasons for undertaking the invidious office of an accuser; but he reminded the house of their former resolutions, and asked with what consistency they could see recorded on their own journals, reports of corruption, abuses, and peculation, without tracing the crime to its perpetrator, and the evil to its guilty source? He then stated the ancient and constitutional mode of impeachment, on which he wished to proceed, in preference to two other forms of prosecution, of which he mentioned the inefficiency for the present case. These were, prosecution by the courts below, and by a bill of pains and penalties. Preparatory to the mode of trial which he proposed, it behoved the house first to vote whether or not there was to be an impeachment, and next to appoint a committee for inspecting the evidence. Having stated these proposals with great precision, he urged the unavoidable necessity of making this in-

quiry into the known delinquency committed in India, personal and particular. What would be the sentiments of the miserable natives of India (he asked) if the result of proceedings in that house should be, to find that enormous peculation had existed, and that there was no peculator; that there was gross corruption, but yet no person corrupted; that a torrent of violence, oppression, and cruelty, had deluged that country, but that every soul in it was just, moderate, and humane? To trace peculation to the peculator, corruption to its source, and oppression to the oppressor, had been the object of several searching committees instituted by the house; and the result was, that government could not be foul, and the governor pure. He concluded with moving for the production of certain papers necessary for the establishment of his charges, which were, in general, granted. Mr. Dundas, who, during the course of a long and able speech, had smarted under Mr. Burke's censure, for having shrunk from the accusation of the man whose guilt he had himself so largely contributed to report, endeavoured to defend his conduct, by distinguishing between that degree of criminality which appeared to him in Hastings's government worthy of his recal, and that greater enormity which deserves persecution at home. Mr. Pitt, rising in his defence, directed all the bitterness of his invective against the mover, and his friend Mr. Fox. They need not, he said, complain that the business is not in other hands; for, if the prosecution was to be the work of violence and resentment, it is best fitted for their own. He warded the charge of inconsistency from his friend, by reminding the present opposition of their union with the greatest enemies they had ever encountered, in the memorable event of the coalition.

On the 4th of April, Mr. Burke came forward,

CHAP.
XXI.

1786.

completely equipped for impeachment; and having solemnly risen to charge Warren Hastings, late governor-general of Bengal, with sundry high crimes and misdemeanours, exhibited the first nine articles of impeachment; the remainder, which completed the number of twenty-two, were given in the succeeding week.² On the 26th of the same month, Mr. Hastings petitioned the house, that he might be heard in his defence to the several articles, and that he might be allowed a copy of the accusation, which, after some fruitless opposition from his accuser, was allowed. On the 1st of May, Mr. Hastings being called to the bar, after a grateful acknowledgment to the house for being allowed to be heard in person, proceeded to read his defence, in which he was assisted by Mr. Markham, son to the archbishop of York, and the clerks of the house. Three days were spent in the hearing the defence, after which it was printed, for the use of the members. The effect of the defence, which, it had been confidently hoped, would have quashed all future inquiry, did not seem to correspond with the sanguine expectation of Mr. Hastings' friends.

The remainder of the month of May was chief-

² These charges were under the following heads — 1st, The Rohilla war. 2^d, With respect to the provinces of Cava and Allahabad. 3^d, On the treatment of the rajah of Benares. 4th, The maltreatment of the princesses of Oude. 5th and 6th, The treatment of the rajahs of Faruckabad and Sahone. The 7th, the 10th, the 11th, and 12th, regarded extravagant contracts and enormous salaries bestowed on officers of the governor's own creation. The 8th regarded illegal presents. The 9th, disregard of the orders of the company. The 13th, Ambassadors sent to the na-

bob of Arcot and the subah of the Decan. The 14th related to the desertion of the rana of Gohud in the conclusion of the Mahratta peace. The 15th, Improper management of revenues. 16th, The ruin of the province of Oude. The 17th regarded the ill-treatment of a native chief, Mahomed Bezah Khan. The 18th, The ill-usage of the Mogul. The 19th charge was for libelling the directors. 20th, The Mahratta war. 21st, The suppression of correspondence. And the 22^d related to the treatment of Fikulla Khan.

ly spent in examining witnesses; and on the 1st of June, Mr. Burke brought forward the first charge, relating to the Rohilla war, and concluded a speech of great length and energy, by moving that there were grounds for impeaching Warren Hastings on this article for high crimes and misdemeanours. By the voice of a large majority, who voted after this debate, it was at last decided, that on the article of the Rohilla war there were *not* grounds for impeaching the late governor.

CHAP.
XXI.

1786.

On the 13th of June, Mr. Fox brought forward a motion similar to Mr. Burke's on the Rohilla war; but a more important charge was soon to be produced, relating to the expulsion of Cheyt Sing from the zemindary of Benares, and the governor's severe and arbitrary conduct in that province. By the supreme council of Benares it had been solemnly decreed, that the native prince, Cheyt Sing, and his heirs for ever, should enjoy the zemindary of Benares, on condition of giving only the usual payment of revenue hitherto paid to the late vizier. The refusal of Cheyt Sing to pay beyond this stipulated sum drew down the vengeance of the British governor, and terminated in the expulsion of the native prince, after considerable bloodshed of his people. In defence of Hastings' conduct, it was now, as formerly, urged as a plea, that in cases of extraordinary danger to the empire, the superior had a right to demand extraordinary aids of his vassal. In the present debate, the friends of Hastings saw, with dismay and apprehension, that the chancellor of the exchequer, whom they could so little suspect of partiality to their enemies, sided with the accuser, declaring his persuasion, that, admitting the right of Mr. Hastings to have taxed the zemindar, his general conduct in the business had been *unusually* severe. The resolution of Mr. Fox, that

CHAP.
XXI.

1786.

there were grounds of impeachment on the Be-
nares charge, was carried triumphantly by the ac-
cusers of Hastings, with a majority of forty votes.

Beyond this decision nothing of importance was
brought before parliament during the present ses-
sion in the case of Hastings.

Mr. Dundas's bill for improving the government
of India was introduced during these transactions.
It gave the governor-general the nomination to va-
cant seats in the council; it limited his officers,
and authorized him to decide upon every measure,
whether agreeable or not to the council. Mr. Burke
opposed the proposition, as enlarging the powers
of the governor to an arbitrary extent; but Mr.
Dundas, with considerable force, demonstrated
that many recent mischiefs in India had arisen from
the limitation of the governor's powers, which it
was now meant to extend; and that a salvo was at
hand to the abuse of such power, in his responsi-
bility to a British tribunal.

The supplies of the year being voted for 18,000
seamen and 30,000 land-troops, and the loan be-
ing fixed at £2,500,000, a speech from his ma-
jesty closed the session on the 11th of June.

A loan of £2,000,000 was raised this year by
exchequer bills; £200,000 was to be raised by
a lottery. The new taxes were few and slight,
being only intended to fill up the deficiency requir-
ed for the sinking fund.³

It was during this year that the hand of a wretch-
ed and obscure lunatic, Margaret Nicholson, had
nearly deprived our illustrious sovereign of life. On
the 2^d of August, as the king was alighting from his
carriage at St. James's, a woman, who stood in the
court-yard, struck at his majesty with a knife, but

³ They consisted of a new duty on spirits of one penny per gallon, another on hair powder and po-
matum, and another on deals and
betters.

without effect, as the instrument was blunt and slender. She was immediately arrested, and examined by medical consultation, in presence of the Privy council, who, on a full proof of her insanity, committed her to Bethlem hospital. The loyal addresses of the people, on this occasion, displayed the strength and sensibility of their personal attachment to the sovereign.

CHAP.
XXI.

1786.

CHAP. XXII.

Meeting of the fourth session of parliament.... Measures recommended to the attention of parliament.... Consideration of the commercial treaty with France ... Question concerning the Scotch peerages.... Consolidation of the taxes. ... Farming of the revenue on licences for post-horses ... Motion for repealing the test and corporation acts.. Prince of Wales's debts laid before parliament.... Petition of the debtors in Newgate.... Impeachment of Hastings.... Session concluded.... Interference of Britain in the disturbances of Holland.... Parliamentary proceedings from the opening of the year 1788.... Declaratory act respecting the transporting of troops to India... Discussion of the slave trade.... Resumption of Hastings's trial.... Budget for the year 1788.... Wars in the east of Europe.... Illness of his majesty.... Debates on the regency bill.

CHAP.
XXII.

1786.

As the country still continued to enjoy the blessings of peace, the views of her public councils, and the wishes of her inhabitants, were left at liberty to cultivate their resources of commerce and revenue. It is a grateful task to fill up the chasm which occurs in her history, from the absence of battles and sieges, with the records of her peaceable arrangements and treaties abroad, or of those financial measures at home, which bore but slightly on the people, from the prosperous nature of the times. The state of political parties also continued without any important alteration. The right honourable Charles Jenkinson was advanced to the dignity of a peer of Great Britain, and made chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster

and president of the board of trade; and, though not admitted in form to a seat in his majesty's cabinet councils, was supposed to be confidentially consulted on all affairs of importance. Other promotions in the peerage took place at the same time, which were of less political importance.

CHAP.
XXII.

On the 23^d of January, his majesty opened the fourth session of the present parliament. After congratulating the country on the friendly disposition of foreign powers, his majesty informed the two houses, that he had concluded a treaty of commerce with the French king, and had ordered a copy of the treaty to be submitted to parliament. He recommended to the house of commons to make the revenue an object of early attention, and to endeavour, by some wise regulations, to simplify the state of public accounts. His majesty gave likewise information of a convention which had been formed with Spain, respecting the cutting of logwood in the bay of Honduras. The attention of the legislature was invited to co-operate in a measure of public utility highly important to the feelings and interests of humanity. This was a plan for conveying to the settlement of Botany Bay a number of those unhappy beings, who must have otherwise crowded the jails of the kingdom, or, if discharged after corporal punishment or confinement, might be still expected to infest society with their crimes, and at last increase the too numerous list of public executions. At the period we now mention, and for some time after, the state of this infant colony of Botany Bay was so excessively wretched, as might almost lead us to compassionate the victims who escaped from death, to suffer every species of hardship on its forlorn shores. But the progressive amelioration of this place is an object of consolatory reflection to those who consider the utilities which it may

1787.

6HAP.
XXII.

1786.

yet serve, in converting punishment itself to the purposes of humane reformation. The miseries of the settlement are now so fairly removed, that it will not, in any moral probability, be ever threatened again with famine and distress. Its climate is healthy, and its soil prolific. While it offers to the voluntary settler the possession of every necessary of life, it puts it in the power of humane governors, who superintend the convicts, to proportion their comforts to the exact state of their moral deserts. If any thing under heaven can stimulate the guilty to reformation, it is a scene such as this, where a new world is opened to them, where habits of industry are imposed, not in the gloom and solitude of a dungeon, but, to those who can approve themselves worthy of confidence, on a soil where they are to reap and sow for their own advantage.¹

On the 4th of February, the treaty of commerce with France came to be more particularly considered.² As the opposition which Mr Fox offered to this measure, is extremely singular, and, to all appearance, at variance with the pacific and philanthropic principles which that great statesman has uniformly upheld, it is not easy to pass over this period of parliamentary debate, without inserting very fully the reasons which he gave for his conduct. In the debate upon the address, it is

¹ The number of convicts who have obtained grants of land is a proof of this, which may be found in the accounts of Collins, Hunter, and others.

² By the articles of this treaty, the hardware, cutlery, cabinet, and turnery manufactures of England gained free admittance into France on paying the easy duty of ten per cent ad valorem. In many articles, the duty was reduced to five per cent. the cotton and woollen, ho-

tery, millinery, porcelain manufactures of Britain were admitted at twelve per cent ad valorem. Saddlery at fifteen per cent and linens and cambrics were reciprocally received at equal duties. On our part we agreed to lower the duties on French wines to the same as on Portuguese wines, the duties on brandies were reduced, and olive oil was admitted on the same terms as from other nations.

proper to observe, that Mr. Fox had introduced the subject of the treaty, with a prefatory display of the reasons which he intended more copiously to illustrate on a future occasion, for censuring the present intimate connection with the natural and hereditary enemy of the kingdom. Much stress, he observed, had been laid upon certain trite propositions, which, however true, did not administer to the question. That peace, for instance, was preferable to war, and commerce to conquest, and that mutual jealousies were the cause of frequent mischiefs, were indisputable maxims, but no way applicable to our circumstances at the present moment. All the wars of Britain and France, had been wars of necessity on our part, and the jealousy of the power of France, which we were now called upon to lay aside, had been founded on the fullest experience of her ambitious designs. Where then was the necessity for inculcating forbearance on those who had never gone wantonly to war? where was the prudence of arguing against a jealousy to which we owed our very safety? He deprecated the imputation of being governed by vulgar prejudices, but declared it his opinion, that the external circumstances of the two nations, rendered a rivalry, and, in some degree, an enmity between them inevitable; and that it was impossible to prevent them by any means which human speculation could devise. Nay, he would not hesitate to pronounce, that were such an event possible, it was not to be wished for by any lover of this country. The treaty, he said, must either entirely be commercial, or partly commercial, and partly political, and in one or other of those two points of view, its merit was to be considered. If (as he sincerely wished) it was a mere commercial treaty, the framers of it had only to prove that the new channels of trade,

CHAP.
XXII.

1-87.

which it would open, would not obstruct, or would be more beneficial than all the other ancient channels, which to this kingdom had long been found to convey wealth and prosperity; but if, on the other hand, ministers avowed that the treaty was intended as a political measure, and that they had in view some more close and intimate connection with France, then they would have to shew strong and satisfactory reasons for having pursued and concluded a measure so new in the history of these kingdoms, and of such momentous importance. Such an attempt, Mr. Fox contended, were it even admitted to be safe and prudent, would prove abortive. From a general view of the political conduct of France towards this country, as well as towards the other countries of Europe, it was evident, that, however volatile and inconstant the French nation might be supposed to be, the French cabinet had been the most consistent in Europe, and the most inviolably steady in one ambitious purpose, which was, the unlimited extension of their influence and domination. Mr. Fox concluded his speech with some observations upon the effects which the new treaty would have upon that already subsisting between Great Britain and Portugal, known by the name of the Methuen treaty. This treaty, he observed, had been justly a favourite with the nation for nearly an hundred years, and he trusted that parliament would sanction no new engagement, until they obtained from the minister a satisfactory assurance, that it could not endanger so sure a source of commercial advantage.

Mr. Pitt, in replying to these objections, assured Mr. Fox, that he needed not to have deprecated the suspicion of vulgar prejudices in combating the French treaty, since the opinions he had just advanced, were so far from being vulgar, that he

believed no other person in the kingdom entertained them. He denied the principle of Mr. Fox, that either policy or necessity instructed us to maintain a constant animosity with France; a doctrine, in his mind, equally abhorrent to humanity and common sense. As he could by no means believe the necessary relations of Britain and France to be those of eternal hostility, so he was assured that, unless amity were impossible, such a treaty would be the most likely to preserve it. His antagonist had triumphantly foretold the overthrow of this project, by the restless ambition of France; how soon such an event might take place, he could not possibly foresee; but if war was the greatest of evils, and commerce the greatest blessing which this country could find, (which, though contrary to the, right honourable gentleman's opinions, he believed was the general sense of the nation) then it became the duty of our government, and of parliament, to protract the blessing of the one, and to remove the evil of the other. This was the object of the present treaty. It would operate on the administration of both countries, as a motive to avoid war, if it were honourably avoidable; and from its peculiar advantages to this country, it would strengthen our resources for maintaining war, whenever war should become indispensable. This, said Mr. Pitt, is the true method of making peace a blessing; that, while it is the parent of immediate wealth and happiness, it becomes also the nurse of future strength and security. With regard to the distinction between commercial and political treaties, he conceived that commercial intercourse must greatly affect the political conduct of two nations to each other; but on that subject he forbore to pledge himself to any specific declaration respecting the line of conduct, to which he thought the present treaty would ab-

CHAP.
XXII.
1787.

CHAP.
XXII.
1789.
February.

solutely lead this country, should the peace of Europe be again disturbed. With respect to the influence of the French on the Portuguese treaty, as it was not at present a question before the house; he declined entering on the subject at great length; but if an explanation on that subject were demanded, he should think himself bound to satisfy the inquiry by the following answer:—That the connection with Portugal would not at all be affected; and that we should be left at full liberty, by the terms of the present treaty, to carry into effect the spirit of the old subsisting treaties with the court of Portugal. The subject of the treaty continued to be discussed at great length in several succeeding debates. Of these the issue was uniformly favourable to ministers, not only in majority of votes, but it may be added, with little hazard of dispute, in strength of reasoning also.

If we except one argument to the treaty, viz. the danger of its interfering with that of Portugal, the merits of such an arrangement are surely liable to no objection, and scarcely obscured by one imperfection. The danger of pacific intercourse with France, and the necessity for cherishing jealousy in the hearts of both nations, when both nations are at peace, is a doctrine neither just nor liberal. If it were admitted, it would prove too much; it would sanction eternal enmity: it would generate the very evils which it pretends to avert, since by leaving to the French no possible relation but that of an enemy, it multiplies and strengthens their motives to injure us. The treaty, to use the language of Mr. Pitt, although formed on terms of reciprocity, was calculated to yield the undoubted superiority of advantage on our side. As the population of France so greatly exceeded our own, the treaty furnished to our neighbours a market for only eight millions

of people ;³ but to us it is a market for twenty-four millions. As the soil of France is confessedly more fruitful than ours, and her exports were, from that circumstance, more generally the raw produce of the soil than the artificial manufacture, there was a mutual benefit to the two nations, in bartering the products of industry, for the growth of agricultural fertility. As it is known that trade is more or less beneficial to a nation, in proportion to the degree of labour, industry, and capital, employed in bringing its commodities to market, and to the excess in value of the perfect manufacture above the raw materials, this principle gave a decided advantage to us over the French. If we should receive from France a larger quantity of her produce, should we not now pour *directly*, through the open channels of trade, abundantly more of our cotton, our woollen, our leathern, earthen-ware, and metallic manufactures, than before, when the admission of those manufactures, though prized and desired by the French for their excellence, were only forced by circuitous routes against every obstacle of tax and discouragement? The French, it was allowed, had indeed some, but comparatively few manufactures of equal or superior value to our own. The importation of those into England, Mr. Pitt shewed to be of little importance and no injury. In viewing the relative circumstances of the countries, our superiority in the tariff was manifest. The excellence of our manufactures was unrivalled; and in the result, must give the balance to England. On our part, we only conceded to France the privilege of bringing to us, at a cheaper rate to the consumer, some of the luxuries of her soil, which our refinements

CHAP.
XXII.
1787.

³ The population of Great Britain before the last census, was, by general, though erroneous, computation, estimated at only eight millions.

CHAP.
XXII.

1787.

had converted into necessities, and which no duties were sufficient to exclude.⁴ Finally, in comparing the pecuniary advantages which would accrue to each of the contracting parties, the minister shewed, that although the revenue of France could not be benefited by it to the amount of £100,000 a-year, the annual gain of the English revenue, must necessarily be £1,000,000.

The successive resolutions moved by the minister, respecting the treaty, were carried against an opposition more warm than formidable, and less distinguished by the justice than the eloquence of their pleading. The period of these debates was, however, signalized by no inconsiderate accession to the party of Mr. Pitt's opposers, in the person of Mr. Grey, who took his seat as representative for Northumberland. The maiden speech of this member, in support of Mr. Fox's motion against the treaty, formed a fair prelude to that distinction and influence in parliament, which Lord Howick has since possessed.

While the commons were engaged in this discussion, the attention of the lords was called, by Viscount Stormont, to a question of some importance in the constitution of the upper branch of the legislature, in which the rights of the Scottish peerage were essentially concerned. During the late prorogation of parliament, two of the sixteen peers of Scotland were created peers of Great Britain. The question that arose was, 'whether, after succeeding to a new peerage, they should continue to sit as representatives of the peerage of Scotland? The act of union was silent on this subject. The only precedent that existed, was

⁴ The brandies of France cannot, indeed, be classed under those luxuries of refinement; but the admission of that article, under lower duties, Mr. Pitt shewed, would not

ly affect the smuggling trade; as not a fifth part of the brandy consumed in England, was introduced by any other way than smuggling.

that of the duke of Atholl, who, in 1786, was created a British peer, while he sat as one of the sixteen peers of Scotland. The precedent of the duke of Atholl, was in favour of the affirmative decision of this question; whilst the negative appeared to Lord Stormont so strongly supported by every principle of equity, analogy, and fair construction, as to induce him to bring the question, in the face of those difficulties, to a public discussion. After enforcing his motion on this subject in a strongly argumentative speech, though the lord chancellor opposed his opinion, he succeeded in obtaining a decision of the lords, that a British peerage, accepted since the union, incapacitates the holder from voting in the Scottish representation.

CHAP.
XXII.
1787.

The convention with Spain, alluded to in his majesty's speech, had been concluded on the 14th of July 1786, and chiefly related to the privilege of cutting logwood. The British possessions on the Mosquito shore were ceded in exchange for a tract of land on the bay of Honduras.

The celebrated plan of consolidating the duties of custom recommended in his majesty's last address, was brought forward in a committee of the whole house, by the chancellor of the exchequer, on Monday the 26th of February. The general outline of his plan, by which he proposed to remedy a number of existing abuses in that department of the revenue, was to abolish all the duties as they existed in their present complex and confused manner; a confusion which occasioned distraction and uncertainty to the merchant, made him dependant upon the officers of customs for his very knowledge of the amount of his debts to the custom-house, and prevented him from anticipating the real value of his cargoes, to the embarrassment and hinderance of his business. For these confused duties, the financier proposed to substitute in their

CHAP.
XXII.

1787.

stead, one single duty on each article, amounting as nearly as possible to the aggregate of all the subsidies already paid, only in general where a fraction was found in any sum, to change the fraction for the nearest integral number, taking on an average the higher rather than the lower. This advance on the fractions, would bring the revenue £20,000 a-year, for which the merchant would be more than compensated, by the simplicity of his taxes. The Excise, though not so intricate, yet needed reform and regulation; the duties on single articles, candles, spirits, &c. were to be brought into one point of view, and rendered so simple in the collection, that there could be no danger of mistaking them, or of being obliged to trust implicitly to its officers. After these amendments, it was necessary to have regard to those public creditors of government annuities; who depended on the payment of some of the abolished subsidies, and among the creditors there were some annuitants entitled to a valuable priority over the rest. But to put the public creditor perfectly at ease, the minister recommended, that not only all the several funds then consolidated, should become chargeable with the public annuities; but that every other resource of the country should be a collateral security for the payment of those debts, and that the valuable priority of payment already mentioned, should be also held sacred. Mr. Burke gave his sanction to this able scheme of the minister, in terms of disinterested approbation, equally honourable to himself and to the members of opposition, who coincided with him.

April 26.

Another financial resolution of the present session was successfully recommended by the minister. In collecting the duty on post-horses, it was notorious that the public revenue was yearly

defrauded to a large amount, by the collusion that subsisted between collectors and inn-keepers. To supersede those frauds, the minister proposed dividing the country into districts for collecting the horse-tax, and entrusting that collection to farmers of the tax, who being responsible for a certain sum, and deriving their profit from the surplus, should have their vigilance pledged by self-interest, to inspect and to prosecute defrauders. Mr. Windham and other speakers of his party resisted the bill as not only injurious to the finances, but hostile to the constitution of the country. Our laws, they said, had never recognized the practice of farming the revenue; it was a mode of taxation peculiar to despotic governments, unknown to the British constitution. - It would delegate (they said) the right of gathering revenue, one of the highest powers of the executive government, to men who were strangers to parliament, and to persons who, supposing a subject to be aggrieved, were absolutely beyond the reach or controul of parliament, until their lease of farming were expired. If frauds against the revenue were suspected, they should be traced, and if traced, they should be punished; but to save the executive that trouble of enquiry, it was not necessary to hazard innovation, by introducing so pernicious a precedent. The numbers of the minority, either by the eloquence of Mr. Windham, or the accidental absence of ministerial members, bore a larger proportion than usual on this occasion. In a house of 267, the opposition counted 95 votes when the bill was carried against them. Among the financial resources of Mr. Pitt, the tax on retail shops, in the list of his taxes since 1785, cannot be reckoned among those which contributed to his popularity. It occasioned, — the contrary, renewed clamours and petitions from every quarter of

CHAP.
XXII.

1787.

the kingdom; these were loudest in the metropolis, where the pressure of the tax was felt by an industrious and sober class of the community, traders of small capital, dependent for subsistence on the quick and daily circulation of that capital; and on the other hand, most useful to the public, by supplying the comforts of life in those fractional portions, which the poorest can afford to purchase. The capital of those smaller traders must be always employed to produce profit; it bears with difficulty the laying aside a large sum for their rent, and when that rent is swelled with heavy taxes, the poorer retailers must cease to trade. In the minister's view of the tax, there was no real burden imposed on the trader himself, since it seemed easy to transfer and divide the expence, by an additional charge on his customers; and by raising his prices; but the assertions and the complaints of the shop-keepers were so strong on this subject, as to render it probable, that the minister's speculation on the effect of the tax was erroneous; and that their experience severely proved its injustice. It was not possible, they said, to transfer the burden to their customers, or divide it with the public, by raising prices. The rise of their prices would diminish the extent of their sale. And it is known that the profits of the poorer classes in trade, like the prices of the laborious poor, cannot be diminished, without such individual hardship, as drives taxation to the very brink and proximity of oppression. The hardship of the tax was strongly enforced by Mr. Fox, who, in opposing the bill, was so ably supported by a young member for Durham, Mr. Lambton, as to draw a very liberal compliment to the talents of that early speaker, from the premier himself. The abolition of this tax was, however, reserved for a more fortunate

occasion. Mr. Pitt declared his entire satisfaction with the fairness of it, and a majority of the house coincided with his views.

CHAM.
XXII.

In the political progress of Mr. Pitt, whatever censure may have fallen, from party zeal, on his subsequent conduct, it is not denied that he rose to power on the confidence, hopes, and wishes of the people, as well as of the court. Indeed, if this distinction between the people and the court appear invidious, the rise of Mr. Pitt may, with the same truth, in substance, but by a different mode of expressing it, be ascribed to the common union of sentiment which prevailed, at his appointment, between the people and the crown. Those illustrious whigs, who differed from both the people and the crown, in opposing the son of Chatham, had, by one act of their conduct,^s increased their numbers at the expence of their popularity; and though it is a strong assertion to say that they deserved, yet they certainly incurred, the odium of the people. Among the most clamorous against the coalition, and the warmest combatants for the new minister, who, they thought, was to realize the views of Chatham, without encountering his misfortunes, were the English dissenters. This body of men, who had shewn themselves no insignificant supporters of Mr. Pitt, in the election of the last parliament; their numbers, and the respectability, the piety, and the learning of many of their leaders, gave them weight as a distinct body in politics, as well as religion. To Mr. Pitt they had looked with sanguine zeal, as the supporter of those pretensions to farther toleration, which they expected from the growing liberality of peaceable times. Their claims, they apprehended, though connected with the general cause of reformation, were yet unsullied by

CHAP.
XXII.

1787,

any guilt of innovation; they conceived them to have lain dormant, but never to have been extinct; to be revived, in the present instance, rather than created. Mr. Pitt, it is true, had met with coldness, and even repulsed, the propositions of the Irish reformers; but to the cause of English reform he had not yet declared himself hostile. The dissenters had claims on his partiality, as far as public justice could permit his partiality to be biassed; their sentiments were but of late congenial with those of the minister; they foresaw, in the repulse of those Irish reformers, whom the reforming minister had declared inconsiderate and overheated, no presage of their own fate. On this occasion, as the reasons which Mr. Pitt assigned for resisting their claims are more fully recorded than it is possible here to record them, the impartial reviewer of that great man's life must weigh the justice of his apology, by his own words. It could not fail, however, to afford the dissenters a lesson of political liberality, to find, in the person of that statesman, whom they had decried and resisted for the sake of elevating Mr. Pitt, a warm and able supporter of their petition. Mr. Fox seconded the motion of Mr. Beaumont for their relief, and pleaded their cause with the accustomed powers of his eloquence. On the 28th of March, the former gentleman, at the request of the deputies of the dissenter congregations, moved the house of commons for the repeal of the corporation and test acts. The three most important points which he undertook to prove were; first, That the test act was never originally meant to be levelled against the dissenters, and that the clauses which had dictated the corporation act had long ago ceased to operate. The second point which he maintained was, that for reasons merely religious, it was a hardship, amounting to cruelty, that men should be exclud-

ed from civil and military trusts. In the third place, he contended that the public good by no means required the infliction of those penalties and stigmas to be laid on the dissenters. In tracing the history of the test act, Mr. Beaumont shewed distinctly, that when it passed, in 1672, it was the dread of popery, not of the dissenting protestant faith, which incited the parliament to pass it. The act itself carries this truth in its title, being an act for preventing popish recusants. The presumptive heir to the throne, and the first minister of state, were avowed papists, and the king himself suspected of favouring that religion. The catholic minister, Lord Clifford, tried to persuade the dissenters to oppose the bill; as they were confessedly not the objects of its rigour; but those disinterested men declared, through the mouth of Alderman Love, the member for the city, that, in time of public danger, when delay might be dangerous, they would not oppose any bill which had the security of the protestant faith for its object, but would trust to the good faith of parliament for their future relief from that bill. The lords and commons, admitting the justice of their claim, passed a bill soon after for their relief; but a prorogation of parliament defeated their intention. A second bill for their relief passed both houses; but Charles II evaded giving it his assent, by procuring the services of a clerk, who stole it. The corporation act Mr. Beaumont allowed to have been occasioned by dislike to the sectaries; but the sectaries of those days (in 1662) had been concerned in the agitations of the kingdom; whereas the present sectaries were lovers of peace, men whose hearts were imbued with loyalty. In the room of the sacramental test, Mr. Beaumont proposed to substitute no other than the oath of abjuration and

CHAP.
XXII.

1779

CHAP.
XXII.

1787.

supremacy, and such a declaration against the political dogmas of the catholics, as should prove the person, if connected with the Roman church, to be at least unconnected with the Roman court, and loyal to ours. He referred to the example of other nations, who had found no danger in dispensing with sacramental tests; of France, who had protestants at the head of her armies and her cabinet; of Russia, who had mahometans in her service, fighting against mahometan foes; of Prussia, Holland, and the emperor, who made religion no ground of disqualification. On these considerations, on the needlessness, the hardship, and impolicy of degrading a class of loyal men, as well as the indecency of profaning the awful institution of the sacrament, by mixing it with temporal concerns, some of the ablest speakers in the house supported Mr. Beaufoy's motion. The motion was opposed by Lord North and Mr. Pitt, on grounds of general expediency. By some of the warmer churchmen it was resisted on arguments of a much more personal nature, from a dislike, or at least distrust, of the principles of dissenters, which Sir William Dolben and other members acrimoniously, although honestly, avowed. Lord North and the premier successively contradicted Mr. Beaufoy's statement, that the dissenters had not been meant to be included in the test-bill; they had been included, and, unless by absolute intention, their names could never have crept into the act, whatever might have been the subsequent intention of parliament. They denied that the test of faith was a stigma on dissenters. The right of states to confine their public trusts to men of a particular faith was an inherent right exercised by all states. If dissenters have a right superior to that restriction, then there is no religionist in the

country who may not assert the same right. If the restrictive power of a state be restrained, the argument will apply also to political restriction; and who shall then deny the usurpation of those freeholders, who, possessing forty shillings a-year, debar from the right of voting at elections those paupers who have no freehold. Whatever the dissenters may be, said those speakers, they are but men, and all men must possess the irradicable bent of human beings, to propagate and spread their religious tenets, even to the prejudice and danger of every other creed. Sir William Dolben followed up those general reasonings, by ascribing to the dissenters, without circumlocution or ceremony, the most licentious and dangerous opinions. He charged them with hostility to the church, and disaffection to the constitution, of England. From a book written by one of their polemical writers, he quoted a passage in proof of his accusation.—‘We are laying’ (says that author) ‘grain by grain, a train of powder, which will one day blow up the fabric of error.’ By this fabric of error, said Sir William, is meant the church of England; by the train of gunpowder is meant their secret design of destroying it. The dissenters have justified this passage, by quoting also the context, which describes their hopes *to rest on the silent propagation of truth*. They deprecate the imputation of destructive designs. ‘It is probable that the fears of the knightly churchman on this subject may have been falsely alarmed; but still the dissenters, and all men who ground their hopes on the *silent propagation of truth*, should be moderate in the use of their figures, and abstain from all metaphors which, even in sound, associate the idea of a gunpowder-plot. Mr. Beaufoy’s motion was rejected by a large majority.

CHAP.
XXII.
1787.

CHAP.
XXII.

1787.

April 20.

A subject was the same day brought forward in the house of commons, previous to the opening of the budget, which had for some time engaged the attention and interest of the public. The prince of Wales had, three years ago, arrived at the age of majority, and had been settled in a separate household and establishment, with a revenue of £50,000 a-year. In the year 1786, his royal highness was found to have contracted debts to the amount of £150,000. He was no sooner informed of the embarrassed state of his affairs, than he resolved to take effectual measures for the relief of his creditors. An earnest application to his father for a discharge of his present incumbrances, accompanied with assurances of conforming his future expences to his income, having been understood to have been refused, in a message conveyed from his majesty to the prince by one of the principal officers of state, his royal highness was to throw himself on the generosity of parliament. As no other means of satisfying the prince's creditors remained, a question was put therefore to ministers, in the house of commons, by a gentleman intimately acquainted with the heir-apparent, Mr. Newnham, whether it was their intention to bring forward any proposition for relieving the prince of Wales from his present embarrassed situation? Mr. Pitt said, that it was not his duty to present such a proposition without his majesty's commands, and with such commands he had not been honoured. Mr. Newnham then announced his intention to bring the matter before the house on the 4th of May.

In the meantime, the prince's friends were indefatigable in their endeavours to procure the support of the independent members of parliament to the purposed motion. Their numbers, on several

occasions, appeared to give serious uneasiness to the minister. Mr. Pitt, as if to check the forwardness of the party, declared, in one of the conversations on this subject, that he should be compelled, by the discussion of his royal highness's situation, to disclose circumstances of a very disagreeable nature. Mr. Rolle, a strong adherent of the minister, denounced this menace with still greater solemnity, as tidings of very serious importance to the church and constitution of England. When the substance of those tidings was required, they proved to be an attachment and connection which had for some time subsisted between the prince and Mrs. Fitzherbert, a lady of the catholic church, with whom it was utterly impossible for his royal highness to have contracted a legal marriage; but there was a floating unfounded report, that he had privately married her. On the mention of this report, Mr. Fox came to the house, authorized by the prince, to deny the assertion. Mr. Fox was also authorized to explain such parts of his royal highness's conduct as were connected with the question to be brought before the house. But, either from a general and decided appearance in the commons of an earnest disposition to espouse the cause of the heir-apparent, or from personal interference and influence, the matter was privately accommodated before Mr. Newnham's motion could be made. A message was received on the 21st of May, importing his majesty's desire, that the house should take into consideration the discharge of his royal highness's debts, and informing the house that his royal highness had given his majesty the fullest assurance of his determination to confine his future expenses within his income, which had been increased, as his majesty had directed, by a sum of £10,000 a-year, to be paid from the civil list. The next day, an

CHAP.
XXII.

1787.

CHAS.
KENT

1784.

address was ordered to be presented to the king, in which they humbly desired that his majesty would be pleased to direct the sum of £161,000 to be issued out of his majesty's civil list for that purpose, and that the sum of £20,000 should be allotted for the wages at Carleton-house.

The proceedings of this session cannot be passed over without noticing a very singular address which the legislature received from the debtors in Newgate, complaining of their miserable existence under the prospect of perpetual confinement, and beseeching, that if no other relaxation of their doom could be permitted, they might at least be allowed the milder punishment of transportation with the convicts to New South-Wales. A request so expressive of misery, had probably some influence with the commons in passing a bill before the close of the session, for the relief of insolvent debtors; but the humane proposal of the commons was thrown back by the lords. The powerful authority of the lord chancellor, Thurlow, was on this occasion wholly hostile to the cause of humanity. His lordship strongly protested against all innovation on the debtor laws. On the authority of his own experience, and that of the late Lord Mansfield, he declared that he had found, out of twenty cases of insolvency, scarcely one inhumane creditor; and he assured the lords, that the very prospect of a bill for relieving insolvents, had induced a number of fraudulent men to elude the payment of their debts, by embracing bankruptcy and a prison. The evidence of Alderman Le Mesurier, that no addition to the usual number of confined debtors had taken place since the rumour of a bill for their relief, was an argument of fact, which sufficiently refuted the chancellor's assertion on this subject, even if it had borne the face of probability, that men should embrace imprison-

ment through the hopes of parliamentary relief. As to his lordship's argument on the policy of inflicting perpetual confinement as the punishment of debt, it must be remembered, that the experience of Lord Thurlow and Lord Mansfield is not the experience of all mankind, and that more general experience is favourable to the possibility of poverty being innocent, and wealth inhumane. But, if there were but one case in an hundred, where *'poor misfortune could feel the lash of vice,'* the act of *'forgiving our debtors'* would still remain a duty for law to sanction in a christian country.

On Wednesday the 7^m of February, Mr. Sheridan opened the third charge against Mr. Hastings, viz. the confiscation of the treasures of the princesses of Oude, the mother and grandmother of the reigning nabob. For five hours and a half, Mr. Sheridan kept the attention of the house fascinated by his eloquence; and, when he sat down, the whole assembly, the members, peers, and strangers, involuntarily joined in a tumult of applause. Mr. Burke pronounced it to be the most astonishing effort of wit, argument, and eloquence united, of which there is any record or tradition. Mr. Fox declared, that all that he had ever heard, all that he had ever read, fell incomparably short of its excellence. Mr. Pitt acknowledged, that it surpassed all the eloquence of ancient or modern times. After a temporary suspension of the debate, one of the friends of Mr. Hastings, with some difficulty, obtained, for a short time, a hearing, but finding the house too strongly affected to listen to him, sat down again. Their last expedient was to request the debate to be adjourned, as it would be unfair to debate while the impression of the accuser's eloquence was so warm and recent on their minds.

(HAP.
XXII.

1787.

The commons were so generally impressed with a belief of Mr. Hastings' guilt, that by a vote of 175 against 68, it was pronounced that there were grounds for impeaching him on the third charge. Several other inferior charges were also voted to contain matter of impeachment. On the 2^d of April, Mr. Fox proposed that there should be a general charge of impeachment, and that the house of lords should be informed that the heads of the impeachment were preparing. Mr. Pitt proposed, and the grand movers of the accusation, Burke and Sheridan, coincided with the proposal, that the confused mass of charges should be analyzed, and each part decided by its respective merits. Mr. Hastings applied to the house, that if grounds of impeachment appeared, they should vote his being brought to trial. A committee having been appointed to draw up the impeachment, and examine evidence, written as well as personal, Mr. Burke went, on the 20th of May, to the bar of the house of lords, and, in the name of the house of commons, and of all the commons of Great Britain, charged Warren Hastings with high crimes and misdemeanours. At the instance of Mr. Burke, Mr. Hastings was taken into custody by the sergant at arms, conducted to the bar of the house of lords, and delivered to the gentleman usher of the black rod; but, on the motion of the lord chancellor, he was admitted to find two sureties, one in £10,000 the other in £20,000, and was desired to answer eight articles of impeachment exhibited against him, on the 2^d day of the next session of parliament.

On the 7th of May, Mr. Dundas, as president of the board of controul, exhibited an account of the finances of British India. The debt in India amounted to £9,000,000. The revenue of the last year afforded a surplus of £1,800,000, and

the company would be able to discharge their debt in the year 1790.

CHAP.
XXII.

The total supplies of the year amounted to £12,414,000, and such was the favourable state of the finances, that no additional burdens were imposed.

1787.

On the 30th of May, the session was concluded. His majesty's address to parliament contained, besides the accustomed acknowledgments to the legislation, an allusion to the circumstances of a neighbouring nation, of very serious importance. 'The civil commotions of the Dutch republic' arose to such a height during the present year, as to need, or at least suggest, what is usually the last remedy of such convulsions in a small state, the interference of foreign powers.

During the adverse tide of affairs which set so strongly against the interests of the stadtholder during the year 1786, the new sovereign of Prussia, whose sister was the princess of Orange, used every effort to establish himself as arbitrator between the republican and the princely factions. The mediation of Prussia was, as might have been suspected, very unwelcome to the Dutch republicans, and they rejected it; but, on the offer of France, whose sovereign was the known, though insidious supporter, and even the paymaster of the demagogues, a negotiation was opened, and the claims of the contending parties submitted to deputed ministers of the mediating powers. Of this negotiation, it would be tedious to detail the particulars. The pretensions of both parties were irreconcilable. The views of the mediators were probably as much at variance with each other. The mediating powers, however, refrained for the present from more immediate interference, and the two parties were left to measure their comparative strength for engaging in a civil war. The factious

CHAP. aristocracy, though superior, it is probable, in talents, in enterprize, and political intrigue, to their prince, and though supported by the purse as well as promises of France, were yet, as far as evidence appears, inferior in the numerical strength of their adherents. The factious states, it is true, called in the armed burghers to their aid, and obtained a considerable, though not a superior party of the people. They found, however, that those new allies could not be made submissive instruments, or brought to serve as a mere counterpoise against the prince. When the burghers found arms in their hands, they began to talk of their own rights also. In Utrecht, and other places, they established tribunital powers and institutions purely democratical. The states of Holland and West Friesland, who were ever the bitterest enemies of the Orange interest, saw that it was better to temporize with the rising spirit of democracy, and tamely suffering what they durst not oppose, preferred yielding to the people to compromising with the court. Among the nobility, or, in the language of the country, the equestrian order, there was a strong party attached to the house of Orange. To the prince's friends, we may add the bulk of the clergy, who regarded their court as purely orthodox, and their most secure protectors against the dreaded innovations of Arminianism. It may seem irreconcilable with this view of the stadtholder's supporters, that his enemies should now be so formidable, and should have already precipitated the country into a war against his consent. But the wonder will be lessened, when we consider that the inimical party embraced a much superior share of the actual wealth of the Batavian states. The landed nobility were not rich, in comparison with the factious aristocracy of the mercantile interest. Those republicans, or aristocrats, whatever name

they deserve, were a small, but compact and well united body. Their wealth attracted a portion of the lower orders; their pretensions to patriotism sanctioned the boldness of their measures; they were individually powerful from their purses, and their talents; and, as a faction, were not like their antagonists, disjointed and loosely connected, but acting with entire community of views. With these advantages, and the private aid of France, it is no mystery why they should have been so formidable.

But the power of this party fell by those very efforts which its wealth and influence enabled it to make. They put arms, as we have seen, into the hands of the lower orders, and induced them to rise against the stadtholder. The confusion and the horrors which arose from the fierce and revolutionary zeal of the insurgents were such, that many of the very instigators of rebellion became terrified at the wild and lawless spirit which they had conjured up, without the power of appeasing. The year 1786 had exhibited a complete civil war in Holland. Early in the present year, the city of Amsterdam changed sides, and declared for the prince. The causes of this change may have been numerous, but the leading one may be fairly supposed to have been disgust and dread, at the prospect of revolutionary fury. As the spirit of revolution rose more general and formidable, the states-general of the commonwealth, who had hitherto remained impartial in the contest, declared also for the existing establishment, and the dispute now lay between the prince of Orange and the states of Holland, a party composed of factious nobility and revolutionary citizens. The summer of 1787 exhibited a scene of dreadful commotion over all Holland. In the provinces, every thing yielded to the fury of the malcontents; but in Amsterdam,

CHAP.
XXII.

1787

although that city was for some time a scene of pillage, and even of some bloodshed, the states general, standing now in opposition to the states of Holland, discouraged the usurped authority of the latter. What was of still more importance to the stadtholder, the army were persuaded to declare decidedly in his favour by the influence of a Scotch officer, Colonel Balneavis, who joining him with two battalions, set an example which brought over the rest.

While these occurrences were evidently approaching to a farther trial of strength between the republicans and the prince, it was well known what support either party might eventually expect from the neighbouring powers of Europe, but no express declaration or pledge was given in public by any of them. France was known to favour and support the insurgents. The court of Berlin, not secretly, but openly avowed their favour for the prince of Orange, and remonstrated with the refractory states. Hitherto, the Prussian interposition had not exceeded remonstrance; but, by an accidental circumstance, it was brought the length of threat and denunciation. The princess of Orange, a bold and spirited woman, growing impatient of her residence at Nimiguen, to which place the prince and princess had retreated during the heat of the troubles, proposed to come to the Hague, and, by addressing the people in person, to defy the power of her enemies, and trust to the popularity of her cause. She proceeded on this journey with a few attendants, but was arrested on the borders of Holland, near Schoonhoven; and, by the fury of the insurgent populace, was insulted, and for a while made a captive. This insult roused the cabinet of Berlin. Satisfaction, atonement, the punishment of the perpetrators, was demanded. The states of Holland, somewhat inti-

midated by this memorial, did not sanction, but would make no atonement for the proceeding. The states-general lamented the event, but could do no more, as the provincial states were obstinate in refusing satisfaction.

CHAP.
XXII.

1737.

After repeated, but ineffectual remonstrances, the Prussian monarch marched an army of 15,000 men, under the duke of Brunswick, into the province of Guelderland, and without opposition reached the confines of Holland. The revolutionary Hollanders, on the approach of the Prussian army, applied to France for assistance, and obtained a promise of support.

A message from his most christian majesty to the court of London, which was understood to confirm this promise of supporting the Dutch revolutionists, determined our government on the conduct they were now to pursue. Hitherto they had proffered only pacific mediation, for against the arms of Prussia, unless assisted by some other power, the feeble defence of the Hollanders was not much to be dreaded, and peace might be expected very soon to be re-established; but the aid of France, if thrown into the balance of the revolted power, might produce unexpected evils. It might prolong the bloodshed of the Dutch civil war, and eventually, by giving an easy entrance to a French army, accomplish that object of French ambition, which has been since too sadly realized. A powerful army and fleet were immediately raised by this country; and the court of Versailles was made acquainted with the determination of his majesty to strike a hostile blow upon France, if she offered to execute her declared intentions against the stadtholder. The suddenness of Mr. Pitt's preparation, and the dignity of his language, on this occasion, commanded a due effect; it secured also the undivided approbation of the nation.

CHAP.
XXII.

1787.

In the meantime, the duke of Brunswick proceeded in a full career of victory to Amsterdam, where he speedily annihilated the last hopes and resistance of the stadtholder's opponents; and after restoring his brother-in-law to his ancient rights, returned with the unsullied triumph of having re-established a regular government, and used his victory with moderation. The French perceiving that their support of the Dutch insurgents must be at the expence of a struggle with an enemy so ready to meet them, wisely retracted their promises, by an explanation which, although bordering on equivocation, was politely given, and satisfactorily received. They declared, that they never had entertained an idea of supporting the Hollanders by forcible measures. It was not the part of Britain to detect or expose the falsehood of this assertion, since their intentions were now pacific. The British retired from the negotiation, with the perfect satisfaction of having threatened in a just cause, and of seeing our greatest enemy intimidated by the threat.

The interval between the proroguing of parliament on the 30th of May 1787, and its subsequent meeting on the 27th of November following, was not distinguished by any remarkable domestic occurrences. The speech from the throne was full and satisfactory; it explained the grounds of his majesty's interference with the internal affairs of Holland for the restoration of lawful government, and the counteracting of all forcible interference on the side of France; mention was made, that in the course of the late preparations, his majesty had judged it expedient to conclude a subsidiary treaty with the landgrave of Hesse Cassel, for the purpose of maintaining 12,000 troops of that prince, ready for the service of Great Britain. The successes of the Prussian arms, his majesty added, had

already restored tranquillity to Britain, and a mutual agreement had been made between his Britannic and most christian majesty, to place their naval establishments on the same footing as before the armament. The war which had broken out, between Russia and the Porte, was but slightly noticed, as it was an event not likely to affect the immediate interests of England. The speech, after giving an account to the house of commons of the several estimates, and of the extraordinary expences lately incurred, and recommending to their attention the care of maintaining a proper posture of defence in some of the distant parts of his majesty's dominions, concluded with a general congratulation on the flourishing state of the empire, and of the blessings to be hoped for from a peace, which now promised to be secure.

The answer to the address which was moved in the house of commons by the honourable Mr. Ryder, met with, general approbation, but occasioned a few observations on the subjects arising out of his majesty's speech. Lord Fielding rose first, to remark, that although he strongly approved of the late conduct of his majesty's ministers with respect to France, he could not help regretting that more had not been done for the security of our country, and especially, that the enemy's enormous works at Cherburg had not been stopt and demolished by a determined demand to that effect. Mr. Fox was not behind any member in exulting at the spirited interference on the continent, and took credit to himself as one of those who had ever supported the policy of continental alliances, and preserving the balance of power in Europe. He called, however, for an explanation of the two declarations of France, so utterly inconsistent with each other, the one affirming, the other flatly denying, their intention to support the Hol^l

CHAP.
XXII.

1787.

landers by force. He reminded the house of his former remarks on the treacherous disposition of the French court, and produced this as a proof of what he had said upon the subject of the treaty. Within one year from the conclusion of that treaty, our new friend, our faithful commercial ally, had engaged to support a party who were usurpers of the government of the country, and well known to be hostile to this nation. He called farther for an explanation of that part of the speech, in which his majesty stated that our naval establishment was alone to be reduced. It was on this last topic that Mr. Pitt found himself called upon to explain. He did not hesitate to acknowledge, that the late important crisis had led him to inquire with more minuteness into the state of our several establishments, and that his inquiries had produced a conviction, that additional force was proper for their security.

On the 20th of November, Mr. Pitt produced in the house of commons, by his majesty's commands, copies of several state papers. A copy of the declaration and counter-declaration, signed at Versailles on the 27th October; a copy of the treaty with the landgrave of Hesse Cassel; of the convention between his Britannic and most christian majesty, signed 31st August 1787; and an account of the expences incurred by the late armament, amounting for the land forces to £59,878; for the naval department to £175,407; for the ordnance to £18,300; for secret services £83,166, in all £336,751 sterling. Mr. Fox complained that those papers were still insufficient for the satisfaction of the house, who could not, he said, in justice to their own dignity, pronounce approbation of the late armament, unless that paper was produced, by which it was discovered that France intended to support the ene-

mies of the stadtholder by force; unless the fact of France having uttered such a promise was substantiated, not by the minister's mere assertion, but by a written document, the house had no authentic grounds to vote away the money of their constituents upon the faith of such an assertion. He moved, therefore, for a resolution, that the first French notification should be laid before the house. Mr. Pitt contended, that the promise of France to assist the insurgents of Holland with actual force was contained and involved in a state paper, of which the contents were such, as could not be laid before the house; and the motion of Mr. Fox was negatived.

On the 5th of December, the motion of Mr. Pitt, to vote £36,000 for a subsidy the ensuing year (1788) to the landgrave of Hesse Cassel, occasioned a considerable debate. Mr. Fox, though not averse to the subsidiary treaty with that prince, demanded an explanation of the general plan of foreign alliance, otherwise he hoped his present vote for the alliance might not pledge him to support any future measure as a consequence of the treaty. He wished also the terms of the subsidy to extend the services of the prince's troops to foreign, not merely domestic, possessions. Mr. Burke, in looking forward to the probable consequences of the treaty, warned the house that we obtained from the Hessian landgrave an engagement to furnish 12,000 soldiers upon occasion, for £30,000 a-year, yet the prince was too wise a man to have bargained for so small a sum, unless this country had stipulated to guarantee the safety of his dominions; and, by that stipulation, should any of his neighbours attack him, it might so be, that, instead of receiving 12,000 men from the landgrave, we should be forced, by this boasted treaty, to furnish him with 100,000.

CHAP.
XXII.

1787.

On the 10th of the same month, Mr. Pitt brought forward a motion for augmenting the land-forces in the West Indies by 3,064 men, the proposed augmentation to cost £80,000 a-year. In the course of the debate, General Burgoyne demanded whether the additional forces did not also imply additional fortifications on the West-Indian islands? Mr. Pitt avowed that such fortifications would be required; and, on being questioned how much the expence of them would probably be, stated their greatest intended amount at £200,000. A division at last took place upon the motion, that £315,865 be granted for the forces for the plantations and Gibraltar, when there appeared 242 to 80.

1788.

During the apprehensions which had existed last year of a rupture with France, government had resolved to send out four additional regiments to India, on board the company's ships, for the protection of our Indian dominions. This had been generally approved of by the court of directors. The alarm of war in the meantime subsided; but still government determined to fortify our possessions in the east by an augmentation of troops. A dispute, upon this occasion, arose between the court of directors and the board of controul, respecting the expence of sending out the troops, and their future payment. The court of directors, on the authority of some eminent lawyers, contended, that as it was stipulated by the act of 1781, that the company should be bound to pay for such troops only as were sent to India upon their own requisition, they were not bound to take the troops on board the outward-bound fleet of India. The board of controul insisted, on the other hand, that if the directors continued obstinate in their refusal, the commissioners of their own board had a right to defray the expences of the troops out of the territorial revenues of India. It was to obtain

a declaratory act of parliament in favour of the power of the commissioners, as vested by the act 1784, that Mr. Pitt applied to the house of commons on this subject.

CHAP.
XXII.

1788.

The declaratory bill was opposed in both houses, as an assumption of power which the act of 1784 had never meant to convey to the board of controul. The legislature (said the opponents of the bill) did indeed ordain, that, in certain cases, the commissioners of controul should originate orders under certain conditions, such as in treaties or negotiations, or such transactions as required secrecy; but this very power, being an exception to the general principle of the bill, only confirmed that general principle. How can we suppose the act of 1784 to be of the sweeping nature as explained by the proposed measure, since the very objection to Mr. Fox's India bill was, that it would take from the company the express powers which are now proposed to be annihilated. In enforcing this argument, Mr. Fox took occasion to tax the minister with having insidiously stolen from the company every right and privilege which he himself had openly demanded. The only difference was, that Mr. Pitt had taken it for the patronage of the crown, while he had proposed to invest it in the representatives of the people. The bill was decried as improvident, since the company could maintain a hardy and native force of sepoys, well inured to the climate, at an infinitely cheaper rate than transported Europeans. The introduction of so many new officers, as rivals in promotion to those in the company's service, to the prejudice of those veterans in India, who rose by painful seniority, was also represented as severely unjust.

The defenders of the bill contended, that as the right of managing India, and the whole responsi-

HAP.
XXI
—
1782.

bility for its political welfare, had been given to the board of controul, by the act of 1784, the present bill was but a transcript of that act. The conveyance of troops (they said) was a measure purely political; no board could be responsible for the defence of India, if their power of organizing that defence were obstructed or abridged. By the act of 1784, it had been intended that the patronage of India should be left to the company; and, therefore, in the present measure; every thing had been studied which could leave that patronage unimpaired. But the king could not surrender the entire nomination of officers to his own troops; he had, however, allowed the nomination of half the number of new officers to rest with the company. The company might have many meritorious officers unpromoted, but so also had his majesty. The bill was recommitted for farther amendments, and it received some alterations of importance; among which, it was provided by a clause, that no more of the king's troops, beyond the number proposed, should be sent to India under the authority of any existing law. Thus improved, the bill passed, but yet by a majority 'unusually small for a ministerial motion. Many of Mr. Pitt's friends left him on the present occasion, and one of his apologists fairly confessed, that he believed the minister's conscience had been taken by surprize. Mr. Sheridan ascribed the state of Mr. Pitt's conscience, to the impure party connections which he had formed in politics; and advised the minister either to keep his moral sense more vigilant, or to associate with better company.

As if the present period of peace had favoured the growth of moral, as well as physical prosperity in the country, we find that the public mind was roused to active inquiry, by a subject deeply connected with the honour and the interests

of humanity. Although more than a century has elapsed, since the practice of bringing negroes from the coast of Africa, to perform the labour of the West Indies, has been sanctioned by the most enlightened nations in Europe; yet the abhorrence of that practice to the principles of justice and christianity, had scarcely been suggested till late in the last century. From that time to the present, the iniquity of negro slavery, and the slave trade, were made occasionally topics of reprobation, among the most distinguished advocates of reason and religion.⁶ The justice of the slave trade became, during the present and a few subsequent years, a subject of universal interest and conversation. Every class of men, and every individual, the lowest in the community, took a share in the question; if it could be called a question, where humanity and reason pleaded only on one side. In discussing the cause of the negroes, two questions arose which are evidently of very different import. 1st, The propriety of bringing them from Africa; and, 2^d, The propriety of keeping them as slaves when brought. The former question was alone brought forward by the real and temperate friends of humanity; for the immediate manumission of slaves, however congenial to the sentiments of impartial freemen, involves so much embarrassment with the rights of present possessors, and so many evils in probable anticipation, that it was only the rash and misguided who held it up as a practicable doctrine. The parliamentary advocates against the slave trade, and those of the same cause who roused the people to petition in behalf of the blacks,

⁶ Among the names of the chief arraigners of negro slavery, were to be distinguished those of Dr. Warburton, Mr. Westley, Mr. Granville Sharpe, and the Rev. Mr. Ramsay. Those men wrote

or preached against the slave trade, from 1766 to 1788.

The Bishop of London and Mr. Wilberforce, from that later period, became the great champion of the humane cause.

CHAP.
XXII.

1788.

confined their prospects to the abolition of that former evil, which, in the sight of God and man, is most atrocious. It is known, that seventy thousand human creatures are annually torn, by force or fraud, from Africa, to be sold in the western world; of these an immense proportion are brought to the English plantations. It is well known, that of these there are many who have been prisoners of war; many who have been condemned to slavery for crimes; and some who have lived all their lives in a state of slavery, and in changing their soil only change their masters. But it is also known, that there are thousands and tens of thousands, who are not taken in war, but stolen by the slave merchants; that one of the objects and causes of war, is to get slaves for sale, and that of those who are sold for crimes, it is to be supposed that no small quantity are not legal objects of punishment, since the barbarous jurisprudence of the Africans is such, that magic and sorcery are the chief crimes of their penal code. Of those who are sold by their princes, it can only be said, that their sellers are their oppressors, and that we are the accessories. But even when all deductions have been made, the evidence of the traders themselves will establish, that innumerable wretches are consigned to our ships without a crime, or the pretence of an accusation.

Even should honour, humanity, justice, and every pure principle, appear to have dictated the purchase of the slaves, still, by the evidence which was brought before parliament on this occasion, it remained a dreadful difficulty to reconcile with humanity the passage of these unfortunate beings from their native shores to the place of destination. Such a series of facts, disgraceful to mankind, never was substantiated, as when the London and Liverpool merchants, in combating the bill, occa-

sioned the naked nature of the trade to be brought into public view in all its deformity.

CHAP.
XXII.

1788.

Mr Wilberforce, who had early in the session announced his intention of bringing forward a bill for restraining this nefarious trade, being indisposed on the day appointed for his motion, Mr. Pitt rose on the 9th of May, and moved that the house should next session take into consideration the various petitions which had been received upon the subject of the slave-trade; he added, that an inquiry had been already instituted by the privy council on the merits of the trade, which required time to be matured, but would ultimately aid the deliberative proceedings of the legislature. Mr. Fox and Mr. Burke lamented that, on a subject so full of interest to humanity, so much delay had already been allowed; and insisted that an inquiry was much more becoming in that assembly, whose table was loaded with petitions on the subject, than in the privy council, to whom the people never had thought of sending petitions. In the course of the discussion, Sir William Dolben judiciously proposed to limit the present attention of the house to that most flagrant part of the sufferings of the blacks, their passage between Africa and the West Indies; and he entreated the house to pass regulations on this head, without affording any delay to the traders, who, in their terror for the trade being speedily abolished, might overload their vessels with human cargoes, and make a waste of human lives, through avarice stimulated by fear. He accordingly moved the house, on the 21st of May, for leave to bring in a bill to limit the number of the captive Africans in proportion to the tonnage of the vessel, and to secure to them good and sufficient provisions, and other accommodations for health. This bill was humanely passed, and several regulations were enforced respecting

CHAP
XXII.

1788.

the medical attendance of the slaves, and the ventilation of their ships, of which the salutary effects were soon sensibly experienced in alleviating misery and preventing death.

The impeachment of Warren Hastings, in the course of this year, formed by far the most distinguishing part of the proceedings of parliament. In compliance with the order of the lords at the end of last session, Mr. Hastings's answer to the charges brought against him was delivered at the bar of the upper house, and from thence a copy was sent to the commons. A committee was then appointed, at the head of which was Mr. Burke, who presented a reply to the answer of Mr. Hastings, in which he offered to substantiate the charges alleged, if the lords would condescend to fix upon time and place for a trial. On the reply being carried up to the lords, they appointed Wednesday the 13th of February for proceeding upon the trial in Westminster-hall. On the 13th of February, this momentous trial commenced with the legal formalities. The counsel for the defendant were Messrs. Law, Plumer, and Dallas. The assistant counsel for the commons, Dr. Scott and Dr. Lawrence, Messrs. Mansfield, Pigot, Burke, and Douglas. The two first days were consumed in reading the articles of impeachment. On the third, the anxiety of the public to hear Mr. Burke was so great, that the galleries of the hall were full before nine o'clock. About twelve the peers were seated to the number of 164; and the managers being called upon by the chancellor to proceed, Mr. Burke rose and said, that he stood forth, by order of the commons of Great Britain, to support the charge of high crimes and misdemeanours which had been exhibited against Warren Hastings, and that he had a body of evidence to produce which would substantiate the whole of the

charges. After a preliminary peroration upon the object and high importance of the trial, the magnitude of the crimes, and the nature of the evidence, Mr. Burke proceeded to the direct matter of the charge. He stated the power delegated to Governor Hastings by the India company, which he had so grossly abused; the charter granted by the crown of Britain, under the authority of parliament to that company; and the consequent responsibility of their servants to the government of Britain. Tracing the history of the East-India company from its first establishment in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, through its progressive arrangements and constitution, he affirmed that Mr. Hastings had availed himself of every abuse that could arise out of the defective nature of the corporation. That Mr. Hastings, upon the plan chalked out by Sir Elijah Impey, had contributed to build up a system of abuse, connivance, and corruption, by distributing places of trust, of dignity, and of emolument, in forms of seduction which human nature could hardly in such circumstances be expected to resist. He charged Mr. Hastings with having destroyed, or deprived of its use, the only institution of the company which stood in his way, being a wisely-contrived check upon improper proceedings. This was an express obligation upon the company's servants to keep a journal of all their transactions, public and private; a letter-book, in which all their letters were to be entered; and, lastly, to keep a written record, not only of all the proceedings, resolutions, and orders made in their councils, but also of the arguments used, and the opinions delivered by each individual member. To throw off the controul of this check, Mr. Hastings, he said, had instituted a distinction between public and private correspondence, by dispensing with the orders of the company in

CHAP.
XXII.
1788.

boards, appointed by his own authority ; and lastly, by the actual spoliation and destruction of the company records. Mr. Burke's next charge was, that besides abusing the powers of Indian government, conferred by the British charters, he had abused also those powers with which he had been invested by the charter of the great Mogul. On this head, he endeavoured to prove, (in opposition to the chief point of Mr. Hastings' defence, that the native princes held their dominions as mere vassals under their conquerors) ; that neither under the government of the Arabian nor Tartar invaders, nor of the usurping subahs and nabobs, were the native princes and zemindars dispossessed of their estates, and the jurisdictions annexed to them ; but that up to the last unfortunate epoch in their history, viz. their English conquest, they had preserved their independant rank and dignity, their seigniories, and always the right, sometimes even the means, of protecting the people under them.

February.

The second day's speech, of Mr. Burke lasted upwards of four hours. It contained a long and dreadful narration of the transactions of the East-India company, in their connection with the surrounding potentates, of which the particulars contain nearly the whole history of British India, since the time of Lord Clive, and are by far too numerous and complicated to enter into any compressed narration. Resuming the history of Bengal from the usurpation of Verdi Ali Khan, he gave an account of the dethronement of Serajah Dowlah, of the devotion of his treacherous servant Meer Jaffier, by the bribe of £1,000,000 to the company, and £1,000,000 to individuals in their employment ; of the under-plot on the same stage, by which Shaw Zaddah, the Mogul's eldest son, was put to death ; and of the infamous collusion of the

directing court at Calcutta with the performers of the catastrophe. He next drew a strong and affecting picture of the miseries which were entailed upon the subjects of Cossim Ali, when that guilty potentate, to pay the English the price of his elevation, was obliged to harass and oppress the natives; and the acts of whose infamous tyranny were among the precedents which Mr. Hastings had pleaded in his justification. From the sale of kingdoms (the-accuser continued), they proceeded to the sale of prime ministries and official dignities; the prime ministry of the restored Subah Meer Jaffier, was set up to auction, and sold for £220,000. Nundcomar, a Gentleman, the unsuccessful bidder, shortly after threatening to inform against Mr. Hastings, was hanged on the charge of a crime, which, by the laws of his country, was not punished with death. By these and by other abuses, especially by his illegal suppression of all the courts which had been humanely instituted for the protection of the people, the native government had almost totally vanished from Bengal, or was only fit to be a private perquisite for speculators.

On the third day, he opened his speech with an explanation of the company's affairs, and Mr. Hastings' situation, sufficient and distinct to shew, that the latter was bound by every tie, legal and honourable, not to take presents either for himself or the company's servants. But, far from acting in this manner, Mr. Hastings, after obliging the zemindars, or ancient nobility of India, to bid for their own confiscated estates, at a sale pretended to be public, but in reality private, had exposed to sale the offices of justice, the successions of families, guardianships, and other sacred trusts in Bengal.

In this desultory, but severe accusation, the principal proof rested upon the evidence of Mr.

CHAP.
XXII.

1788.

Paterson, who was sent by the company to report the state of the country of Dinagepore, a country which was given over by Mr. Hastings to the barbarity and avarice of Gunga Govad-sing, who, though of infamous character, was described as the colleague in oppression, and the bosom friend of the governor. ‘From the whole view of those transactions,’ (said the accuser), ‘I charge Mr. Hastings with having destroyed the whole system of government in the six provincial councils, for private and bad ends, and with illegal exertion of authority. I charge him with having delegated to others, that power which the act of parliament had directed him to preserve in himself. I charge him with having appointed a dewan (secretary) to whom Englishmen were to be subservient, whose name, by his own knowledge, by the general voice of India, by recorded official transactions, by every thing that can make a man known, abhorred and detested, was stamped with infamy; with giving him his whole power, which he had thus separated from the council general, and from the provincial councils. I charge him with taking bribes of Gunga Govad-sing; with having alienated the fortunes of widows; with having taken the lands of orphans unjustly, and given them to his wicked dependants; with having committed to Debi Sing, another associate, similar in infamy to Gunga Govad, whose wickedness was known to himself and all the world, besides three great provinces; and thereby with having wasted the country, destroyed the landed interest, cruelly harassed the peasants, burnt their houses, ravaged their crops, tortured their persons, and sullied the honour of the whole female sex of that country.’

Such were some of the outlines (for it is impossible, without expanded limits, to give the substance)

of Mr. Burke's celebrated charges against this culprit, the highest in power and importance that was brought to a court of justice during the present age. A proposal being made by the managers of the impeachment, that each article of the charges should be answered singly, and then replied to by the accusers, the defendant's counsel protested against such a mode of trial, and the lords decided, that it should not be adopted. On the 7th day, Mr. Fox opened the Benares charge; and next day, Mr. Grey stated and applied the evidence. On the 13th day, Mr. Anstruther summed up the evidence on the Benares charge. On the 14th day, Mr. Adam opened the second charge relative to the princesses of Oude. On the 15th day, Mr. Pelham stated the evidence. For sixteen days following, evidence was heard and examined. Mr. Sheridan then summed up the charge. The trial was then adjourned to the next session of parliament.

CHAP.
XXII.

1788.

Nearly co-eval, and intimately connected with the case of Hastings, was the impeachment of Sir Elijah Impey, by Sir Gilbert Elliot, (now Lord Minto), which was brought before the house very early in the present session. Sir Gilbert Elliot impeached the defendant in six different articles of accusation. Of these, the first, and most interesting, was the trial and condemnation of Nundcoomar, an Indian bramin, whose name has been already mentioned in the trial of Hastings. On this occasion, Sir Gilbert Elliot addressed the house at great length, and with distinguished ability. It had been embraced, he said, as a common and corrupt maxim, in palliating the delinquencies of oppressors in India, that the country was made for slavery, that it must be oppressed or abandoned. The reverse was, however, the truth; India must be redressed or abandoned. He stated the

Dec. 12,
1787.

CHAP.
XXII.

1788.

nature, the occasion, and the purposes of the commission under which Sir Elijah Impey had been sent out to India; and that in the two grand objects which were committed to his charge, the protection of the company from the frauds of its servants, and of the natives from the oppression of Europeans, he had, by corruptly changing sides, added his new powers to the very force they were intended to controul, and taken an active part in the oppressions which it was his duty to have resisted. Sir Elijah Impey, in defending himself against the first charge, viz. the condemnation of Nundcomar, contended, that although the authority of the supreme court did not extend over all the inhabitants of the English provinces in India, it included the inhabitants of Calcutta, and that Nundcomar had not been tried as an inhabitant of Bengal, but of Calcutta. On a motion being made by the promoters of the impeachment, that the first charge exhibited in this accusation, contained matter of impeachment, it was negatived by a majority of seventy-three to fifty-five, and it was afterwards voted, that the other charges should not be taken into consideration.

On opening the budget for the year, the minister stated the permanent peace establishment at £15,624,000, but the amount had been recently increased by the Hessian subsidy, by the payment of the prince's debts, the charges on the West-Indian establishments, and other inevitable expences. The permanent revenue he stated at £15,792,000. In the course of five years, it appeared that the revenue had increased to the extent of £5,000,000, of which only £1,000,000 had been raised by new taxes; the rest arose from the progressive prosperity of the country. The supplies granted for the year, were 18,000 seamen, and about 20,000 landmen, besides those who were upon foreign

duty. No new taxes were imposed, but a sum was raised by lottery. The session continued till the 11th of July.

CHAP.
XXII,

1788.

In the royal speech which concluded the session, the intelligence of a treaty concluded with Holland, was the most important communication. By this treaty, the full rights of the stadtholder, as might have been expected, were guaranteed by our government. Contingent assistances were mutually stipulated in case of war. These were limited on the side of the states-general, to 12,000 land forces, twelve ships of the line, and sixteen frigates, on the utmost emergency; the British contingent was to be proportioned to the necessities of the case; but on no summons to fall below 10,000 soldiers, and twelve ships of the line. By a treaty with Prussia, which was concluded nearly at the same time, the stadtholdership was guaranteed in the family of the king of Prussia's relations, and a defensive alliance was contracted, by which, in case of either kingdom being attacked, the allies were, reciprocally bound to furnish a force of 10,000 troops for that country which should be invaded.

By these treaties, an aspect of entire security seemed to be given to western Europe, as far as alliances could maintain the balance of power. From the internal agitations of the French kingdom, which even at this period predicted a long continuance, no source of alarm to the surrounding nations could be yet anticipated, or rather the energies of that nation turning inwardly to her own disadvantage, appeared to deliver Europe from the terrors of her once formidable ambition. Unconnected with the great eastern empires of Europe, the country therefore heard of war having broke out between the imperial sovereigns and Turkey, as a topic of curiosity rather than interest, and it

CHAP.
XXII.

1783.

was mentioned in the king's speech, as if only to furnish a contrast to the picture of our own pacific prosperity. Of these imperial allies, Russia had for some time been engaged in active hostilities with the Tartars, and by her victories in this unequal contest, was led to cherish no undisguised designs of uniting to her conquest of those barbarous territories, the richer provinces of the Porte, to which they adjoined. Perfidious as well as insolent, she had her emissaries through the whole empire of the sultan to seduce his Georgian, Egyptian, Moldavian, and Wallachian subjects from allegiance, while she demanded of the Turks, to oblige the Leogis Tartars, a people over whom the Porte had no authority, to submit to her arms. To this demand she added the cession of whole territories, without any equivalent. In the midst of these claims and intrigues, the empress made a journey to her Tartar conquests, and at Cherson, celebrating her triumphal entry, inscribed over one of the gates, as if to proclaim her intentions, 'Through this gate lies the way to Byzantium.' To these demands the divan objected the last and solemn treaty of peace which they had made with Russia; but foreseeing that arguments were not to quiet the pretensions of Catharine, prepared for war, and declared it in the latter end of 1787. They made some inroads on the Russian frontiers, which proved unsuccessful. The Russians in their turn attempted the siege of Oczakow with no better fortune; their greatest efforts were, however, delayed till their levies should be complete, and their expected ally, the emperor Joseph, should bring an Austrian army into the field.

Joseph, as restlessly ambitious as his Russian ally, had hitherto confined his plans of depredation to the liberties of his own subjects, or to encroachments on the Dutch and Germans, which

the interference of abler politicians had prevented. In the year 1784, when his reign of innovation was but newly begun, he attempted, by threats and denunciation, to wrest from the Dutch, their dominion of the Scheldt, in open violation of that treaty which had secured his ancestor on his imperial throne, and guaranteed to the Dutch the navigation of that river. From realizing this intended encroachment, he was prevented by the firmness of Holland, by the marked aversion of France to his pretensions, by the probability of other kingdoms interfering, and by the troubles in his Hungarian and Dacian dominions.⁵ His next pretension to the sovereignty of Bavaria was counteracted by the power of the Great Frederic, and from that he was forced unequivocally to desist. The only warfare where Joseph's ambition was destined to triumph, was against the prerogative of his Belgian subjects. On the first of January 1787, two imperial edicts were issued, by which the established constitution of the Netherlands was abolished, and among other relics of their ancient liberty, the institution of the *joyous entry*, which constitutes the magna charta of the Brabanters, was done away. The states of Brabant, seconded by those of Flanders and Hainault, the men of rank, the clergy, and the people, rose in one ferment of resistance, at these wanton and impolitic innovations. Had the emperor been less engaged by plans of foreign conquest, it may be seen, from the sequel, that resistance in the present instance would have probably been unavailing to the Flemings; but the court of Vienna temporized, the engagements of the emperor with Russia arrested for a while the scene of Belgian oppression; the

⁵ The dispute concerning the navigation of that river from Scheldt concluded by a treaty signed at Munster 1785, by which all Septingen to the sea was guaranteed to the states.

CHAP. sovereign in person visited and appeased his per-
 XXII. turbed subjects ; the *joyous entry* was restored.

1788.

It was previous to these last events, that the empress Catharine had made her journey to Cherson ; she had there held an audience with Joseph and the king of Poland ; with the former every arrangement was concerted for invading, and probably dismembering the Ottoman dominions. The emperor, when solicited by the Turks to explain his intentions respecting the war with Russia, replied, that being the ally of the latter power, he was bound to furnish them an army of 80,000 men ; he, however, offered his mediation, which, on explanation, proved to be little better than a transcript of Catherine's last haughty proposals. The rejection of these was held by Joseph a sufficient apology for drawing the sword, while the Turks, with better reason, reproached him for wantonly breaking a peace of fifty years continuance, without being able to allege one injury or pretext. On the 10th of February of the present year, the emperor Joseph proclaimed war with the Turks, and prepared to invade their dominions with four considerable armies. His campaign, however, gained him as little glory in the execution as in the motives. His forces, under Prince Lichenstein, advancing presumptuously against the Turkish fortress of Dubicza, were about to assault it by storm, when their antagonists, inspired with an indignation which pervaded all degrees of the Ottoman army, threw open their gates, and rushing into the very entrenchments of the besiegers, drove them before them with the slaughter of 2000 men. The grand vizier, who conducted the Turkish arms in this campaign, was a person of extraordinary genius. Knowing the nature of his troops, he made the best use of that impetuous but unsteady valour which has ever dis-

tinguished the Turks since the days when their discipline equalled their intrepidity. Assembling his troops for the sake of penetrating into Hungary, he marched towards the Bannat of Temiswar, which is divided by the Danube from the Turkish Servia, and the fortress of Belgrade, invaded the Bannat, and spread desolation wherever he approached. All the terrors of invasion were immediately transferred to the Austrians, and Vienna itself trembled at the approach of the Turks. From these fears she was delivered by a temporary truce, which Joseph found it necessary to conclude with the vizier. On the side of Russia, military operations were much more successful than with the armies of Joseph. The first object of Catharine was completely obtained, which was to enlarge and secure her possessions on the Black sea, and her victories enabled her even to extend her prospects to an ascendancy in the Mediterranean.

From the wars of remote barbarians, the attention of Englishmen was recalled, at this period, to an event of more immediate and domestic importance. Since the rising of parliament, the declining health of his majesty had continued to disquiet the public mind. His disorder increasing, from debility to fever, was at last confirmed, before the first week of November, into settled delirium. It may be easily supposed with what sensations a loyal people received the tidings of this event, which suspended the functions of royalty, whilst the constitution itself, in all its providence for contingent evils, seemed either silent or doubtful on the means by which the executive was, in such a case, to be supplied. The heir-apparent, the queen, and the lord-chancellor, made early arrangements respecting the domestic affairs of the

CHAP.
XXII.

1788.

sovereign. For public arrangements the meeting of parliament was anxiously expected. In the meantime, all those to whom their public influence gave an interest in the crisis, assembled in the capital. An express was dispatched to Mr. Fox, who was at that time pursuing a tour on the Continent, to hasten his return.

On the 20th of November, the state of his majesty's disorder was announced to the peers and commons, in their respective chambers; to the former by the lord-chancellor, and to the latter by Mr. Pitt.³ No important debate was yet brought on. The houses adjourned till the 4th of December; and an edict was at the same time issued to both houses for the strict attendance of their members. On that important day, Mr. Pitt opened the momentous business by proposing that the report of the privy-council on his majesty's health should be considered. An opposition member, Mr. Viner, more judiciously proposed, to examine his majesty's physicians; and Mr. Pitt, after some hesitation, agreed. Mr. Viner's suggestion being followed, a committee was appointed in both houses; and their report, upon examining the king's physicians, was brought up on the 10th of December. Mr. Pitt then moved for a committee to examine the journals of the house for precedents of similar situations, which might be a guide in their present deliberations. Mr. Fox rose in objection to this proposal, asserting that right honourable mover well knew that no precedent could be found of the suspension of the executive government, in which, at the same time,

³ The announce of his majesty's unfortunate situation was accompanied by a report of his majesty's physicians, 'that there was a great probability of his majesty recovery, but that it was impossible to predict the probable time.'⁴

there existed an heir-apparent to the crown, of full age and capacity. For his own part, he was convinced, from the analogy of the common law, that whenever the sovereign was unable, from sickness, infirmity, or any other cause, to exercise his high functions, the heir-apparent, if come to full age and capacity, had a claim to the exercise of the executive government during the continuance of such incapacity, in the name and on behalf of the sovereign, as much as on his demise. He acknowledged, at the same time, that the two houses of parliament were alone competent to pronounce *when* the prince ought to take possession of his right. The chancellor of the exchequer controverted Mr. Fox's opinion with great heat, and pronounced the declaration of it to be little short of treason; he maintained the necessity of immediately settling the question at issue, whether the prince had any right to supply the vacant functions of royalty, but such as parliament should independently grant? Mr. Burke sarcastically remarked, that the position of the chancellor of the exchequer went to set up himself as a candidate against the prince for the regency: in such an election, he said, he must be excused if he should vote for an amiable prince, rather than a haughty minister, who denounced the pains of constructive treason on all who abetted the prince's right. The same subject was earnestly debated in the peers.

Mr. Fox's assertion of the prince's right was decried by his antagonists, as a dereliction of his whig principles, while their own vindication of the elective right of parliament was proudly attributed by ministers to their warm regard for the democratical principles of the constitution; but the opinion of Mr. Fox had not been formed on slight grounds. The sacredness of hereditary royalty is in reality as necessary for the freedom of our con-

CHAP.
XXII.

1788.

stitution, as the right of parliament to watch over the encroachments of royal power. A parliament faithfully guarding and guiding this succession, is the bulwark of popular freedom. A parliament which presumes to elect the executive, converts the constitution to elective from hereditary monarchy. By a few exertions of this elective right, it is easy to foresee what a parliament might soon become: a complete and formidable aristocracy. Whether the power, exerted by parliament at the revolution, was elective or adjudicatory, does not much affect the question. A revolution is a case not to be taken as the standard of precedents, any more than the physic administered in disease is to be called the salutary or advisable diet of the human body. The revolution was a case of desperate necessity. In the present instance no necessity called for altering the line of succession. The royal functions were suspended, the heir apparent was of full age. For parliament to take the absolute election of the executive into their own hands, was in fact creating a revolution. To proclaim that the throne was vacant, and that they would place on it whomsoever they pleased, was contemptuously over-ruling the hereditary right of the prince. But the vacancy of the throne, it may be said, was but temporary; it was not similar to the absolute demise of the royal personage. True, but as it was in providing that the prince's power should be temporary also, that the sole privilege of parliament, constitutionally consisted, it was for them to declare the period for his assuming and renouncing his power. The analogy of common law is not demonstrative proof in favour of any doctrine. But who shall deny that it is venerable authority? When the possessor of an estate is unable to administer to his own affairs, while an heir apparent is entirely capable of suc-

cession, is there any doubt of his right to assume the relinquished management?

CHAP.
XXII.

188.

Mr. Pitt, however, carried, by his accustomed majorities, a series of resolutions preparatory to his own system of a regency, among which resolutions the most memorable was, a declaration of the house of their full right to elect a regent. His arguments were deduced from precedents, and from the nature and spirit of the constitution. His precedents, he candidly confessed, were but analogies. If an heir apparent had a right of succession, an heir presumptive, he contended, had the same. But in Edward III.'s time, no heir presumptive claimed the exercise of sovereignty; parliament provided a council. In the infancy of Henry VI, parliament was convoked by the king's uncle. In the reign of Richard II, counsellors were appointed to administer the executive power.⁹ Mr. Fox was strongly seconded by Lord North, in resisting the assumption of the legislative to elect a regent. "The monarchy," said Mr.

⁹ During the debates on the regency, very distinct answers were given to the premier's doctrines on the subject of precedents. Sir Grey Cooper remarked, that respecting the one drawn from the reign of Henry the sixth, he would undertake to prove, that at the time referred to, both houses of parliament were in a state of abject submission to the power of Richard duke of York and the potent families connected with him. Mr. Fox, in a subsequent debate, replied to Mr. Pitt on the precedents of the first of Henry the sixth and the revolution. From the first precedent he deduced two important facts, 1st, That the power was given to the duke of Gloucester, the next in succession to the crown, and in this nomination the full authority of the sovereign was entrusted to him; 2d, That though, afterwards, limitations were put to the duke's ex-

ercise of the prerogative, the limitations were made in full parliament, when the duke constituted the third estate, and when from each of the bills that restrained his authority, he might have withheld his assent. With respect to the revolution, the election of William was an act to which the parliament was driven by actual necessity, and did not at all apply to the present case. But knowing and feeling the distinct power possessed by the two houses, and possessed by the legislature, knowing that the two houses could act only by resolutions and addresses, and that the legislature could again act only by bill and statute, the convention proceeded by that course which was consistent with their functions, by address; here was a precedent in the revolution applicable to the present case.

CHAP.

XXII.

1788.

Fox, is hereditary; but if the motion of this night should pass, what form of government should we then possess? Let a stranger ask of an Englishman, is the crown of Britain hereditary or not? The Englishman must surely say, I cannot tell precisely, but consult the king's physicians; when his majesty is well, we have an hereditary, when he is unwell, we have an elective monarchy. 'Let the parliament,' said Mr. Fox, 'consider the danger of making any other person than the prince of Wales regent. They may choose a catholic, they may choose any one they please, for the law defines not a regent; but let them remember, for a case of precedent, that it was a regent, a protector, Richard duke of York, who set aside the prince of Wales, and the whole line of Lancaster, though much more nearly allied to the crown.' Mr. Pitt's resolution was carried.

Dec. 22.

To sanction and legalize this vote of parliament, it was, however, necessary to have the royal assent fictitiously attached to it. Mr. Pitt proposed that the lord chancellor should be empowered by commission, to give authority in the royal name. The opposers of the former motion objected with equal vehemence to this measure, as a violation of the constitution, as an absolute assumption, by the legislative body, of the rights of royalty. By whose authority, they demanded, was the lord chancellor to act? Was it in the king's name, at a time when his majesty, by the visitation of God, was disabled from giving or refusing assent? Was it in the name of parliament, then, that the chancellor was to act? that was illegal, for by a law of Charles II it was pronounced, that no law could be valid without the royal assent. The two houses, said Mr. Fox, have been pleased to declare (in contradiction to that opinion which the abettors of his royal highness's right had supported) that they

alone possessed the right of nominating to the regency ; but at the same time declaring that they thought the prince the most proper person to be appointed. Bowing to their decision, he now wished them to go on and to appoint the prince regent. Instead of doing so, what was the spirit of the next resolution? They cannot appoint a regent till they had raised up a third estate in the mock royalty of the chancellor, a royalty conferred by themselves, in violation of law. Thus they first declare their right of conferring the regency, and then, by seeking refuge under the fictitious sanction of royalty, shew that they shrink from exercising it. Mr. Pitt, in reply, interpreted the statute of Charles II, which declares the royal assent necessary for the act of legislating, to be applicable only when the king remained ; when that ceased to be the case, the lords and commons must of necessity legislate by themselves. To obtain, however, the form of royal assent, was at all times constitutional, and for that reason, he wished the chancellor to be empowered to bestow it. However coarse the fiction might seem which gave the title of royalty to a lord chancellor, still, in some shape or other, fiction was unavoidable. Let the regent be appointed, and let it be shewn how fictitious form could be evaded. The regent could not act in his own name without dethroning the king, and in the king's, he could, no more than the chancellor, act without a fiction. The debate concluded with three resolutions of the house, of which the substance was a declaration of the right, and of the will of parliament to provide for the temporary means of giving effect to such bills as they should pass respecting the regency. During these debates, the avowed restrictions that were destined for the power of the regent, by those who dreaded the change of subsisting arrangements,

CHAP

XXII

1788.

were severally arraigned by the prince's friends. In the peers a protest was entered against the resolutions by forty-eight names, among whom were the elder princes of the blood. The proceedings of parliament were not beheld by the people at large with indifference; party-spirit was excited by the fearful change of so momentous an occasion. Should the power of the regent be permitted in any shape that could be called a representation of sovereignty, the ascendancy of the Portland party, and of Mr. Fox's friends, was inevitable, and must have endured with the regency, or survived it, in the event of a new succession. Arrangements it was understood had been already made for the disposal of the highest dignities: the duke of Portland was to have been first lord of the treasury, Mr. Fox and Lord Stormont, secretaries of state, and Lord John Cavendish, chancellor of the exchequer.

Before the plan of the regency was finally discussed in parliament, or offered, by the sanction of the legislature, for the prince's acceptance, its principal outlines were submitted by the minister to his royal highness. The terms were, that he should exercise the regency during his majesty's illness, without being admitted to any share in the care of the royal person, or interference with the king's household and private affairs: that he should be empowered to grant no pension, reversion, or office, (except where the law indispensably required), for any other term than during the king's pleasure, nor any peerage, except on the royal issue.

JAN. 2.

The answer of the prince of Wales was temperate, but decided. Of the steps already taken by parliament, the prince remarked, that he could say nothing, as no decision of either house could be a proper subject for his animadversion: he declared,

however, that it was with the deepest regret that he perceived in that paper a project for producing weakness, disorder, and insecurity in every branch of the administration ; a project for dividing the royal family from each other ; for separating the court from the state, and thereby disjoining government from its natural and accustomed support ; a scheme for disconnecting the authority to command service ; from the power of animating it by reward, and for allotting to the prince all the invidious duties of government, without the means of softening them to the public by one act of grace, favour, or benignity. The plea of public utility (continued the prince) ought to be strong, manifest, and urgent, which calls for the extinction or suppression of any one of those essential rights of the supreme power or its representative ; or which can justify the prince, in consenting that, in his person, an experiment should be made, to ascertain with how small a portion of power the executive government of this country may be carried on. A conviction, however, of the evils that may arise to the king's interest, to the peace and happiness of the royal family, and to the safety and welfare of the nation, from the government of the country remaining longer in its present maimed and debilitated state, outweighs, in the prince's mind, every other consideration, and will determine him to undertake the painful trust imposed on him by the present melancholy necessity, (which of all the king's subjects he deploras the most) in full confidence that the affection and loyalty to the king, the experienced attachment to the house of Brunswick, and the generosity which has always distinguished this nation, will carry him through the many difficulties inseparable from this most critical situation, with comfort to him.

CHAP.
XXII.

1788

self, with honour to the king, and with advantage to the public.

On the 16th of January, the whole plan of the regency, of which the principal features had been delineated in Mr. Pitt's letter to the prince, were laid before the house of commons by the minister, and four resolutions were passed expressive of those restrictions to be imposed on the regent's power respecting trusts, pensions, and honours which have been detailed. By the fourth resolution it was enacted, that the persons attendant on his majesty, and the officers of the household in general, should be under the exclusive controul of the queen, and that a council should be named to assist the queen with their advice, whenever it should be required. By this decisive ordinance, the disposal of honours and emoluments, to the amount of one-fourth of the civil list, was put into the hands of her majesty, and indirectly retained for the strength of a party, whom her majesty was known to favour.

The objections urged against these resolutions were neither few nor unimportant. Lord North, Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, Colonel Fullarton, and Mr. Powys, distinguished themselves in this opposition. It is a maxim in our constitution, said Lord North, that the king never dies, or in other words, that the sovereign power is not to be suspended for a moment; but here it is in fact suspended for an unlimited period. A regency, which from its nature is weaker than the real sovereignty, is reduced to nothing by cutting off those privileges which are the very sinews of executive power; it is stripped of every disposable power by which royalty, or the image of royalty, is upheld. To choose his pages and groom of the household might fairly remain in other hands than the regent's; but of the officers nominally attached

ed to the household, numbers are political and strictly connected with the executive. To deprive the executive of the power of nominating to those situations, was therefore an outrage on the first estate of the constitution.' 'It has been promised' (continued his lordship), 'by the minister himself, that this mass of patronage shall not be used for the purpose of factious opposition to the regency; but a council is to surround her majesty, and with all purity of intentions, that august personage may be misadvised, at least it is not parliamentary to take the minister's word as security for the contrary.' Mr. Pitt, in defending his own scheme of the regency, quoted the precedents in our history, and enlarged on the danger of entrusting to a temporary executive, those powers which might be safely committed to a permanent sovereign.

CHAP.
XXII.
1788.

Two committees from the two houses of parliament, presented to the queen and his royal highness, the plan of the regency. The answer of the prince imported, that his zeal for the interest of these kingdoms, and his respect for the decision of parliament, outweighing every other consideration, would induce him to undertake the momentous charge that was proposed to him. The queen simply expressed her great obligations to the country, and her anxiety to perform her duty, with the happiness of having a council assigned for her assistance. During these events, his majesty continued chiefly under the medical care of Dr. Willis, a clergyman who had kept a lunatic hospital at Northampton, and so much reputed for the cures he had performed, as to be summoned to the capital on the first appearance of the royal malady. Of all the physicians that had attended his majesty, Dr. Willis was known to be the most sanguine in expressing the hopes of the king's

CHAP.
XXII.

1788.

recovery; but hitherto those hopes had been indefinite as to time, and consequently received with less assurance than they were delivered. During the progress of the month of February, they became more and more sanguine.

Amid circumstances so important to the common interests of the empire, the Irish parliament, asserting their legislative independancy (so lately acquired), voted in the peers and commons, an address to the prince of Wales, beseeching him to take on himself the government of that kingdom, as regent, during his majesty's incapacity. Both houses waited on the lord-lieutenant with the address, requesting him to transmit it. His excellency answered, that under the impressions he felt of his oath, and his official duty, he was not warranted to lay before the prince an address, of which the purport was to invest his royal highness with powers to take upon him the government of that realm, before he should be enabled by law to assume it. The peers and commons of Ireland passed, after some debate, a vote of unqualified censure on those who had advised his excellency to make this refusal.

Feb. 12 &
19.

On the 25th of February, commissioners from the Irish parliament arrived in London, for the purpose of waiting on the prince himself, to communicate the address of which the lord-lieutenant had refused to be the bearer. But their friendly intentions were rendered nugatory by the recovery of his majesty. While the regency bill was warmly contested in both houses of the British parliament, its progress was arrested on the 10th of March, by the lord-chancellor informing both houses, (the commons with their speaker being at the bar of the house of lords) that the king had caused a commission to be issued, authorizing the commissioners who had been appointed by former

letters patent to hold that parliament. The commission being read, the chancellor proceeded to acquaint them that his majesty being recovered from his late severe indisposition, had commanded him to return his warmest acknowledgments for their affectionate attachment to his person, and their care for the public good during the late momentous crisis. Addresses of congratulation were immediately and unanimously voted by both houses to his majesty. The general happiness of the people was testified at these tidings by the innumerable congratulations which reached the throne, and by the solemn and religious manner in which the public thanksgiving was celebrated throughout the kingdom. In London the day of celebration was distinguished by the public procession of his majesty to St. Paul's, attended by the members of both houses of parliament.

CHAP.
XXII.
1788.

During the late interregnum, the death of Mr. Cornwall occasioned the new election of a speaker of the house of commons, and the right honourable William Windham Grenville was preferred to the chair. The promotion of Mr. Grenville to a peerage and secretaryship of state soon after, occasioned another vacancy, and the unsuccessful candidate, Sir Gilbert Elliot, was again proposed by the opposition side of the house; but yielding to the ministerial influence of another candidate, Mr. Henry Addington was called to the chair by a great majority of votes.

The business of parliament now returning to its usual channel, the first subject of importance that came before the commons, was a supply of £210,000, solicited for the board of ordnance department, for the purpose of more completely fortifying our West-India possessions. In support of the proposal, the minister of the

CHAP.
XXII.

1788.

war department alleged that the islands, in their present state, were exposed defenceless to the sudden attack of an enemy, and that the capture of many of them, during former wars, might have been prevented, had the aid of fortification been superadded to the defence of a fleet. 'It was urged' in objection to this plan, that fortifications might defend our tenure of the islands, but could not secure them from desolation, in case of their being invaded. That the expence of having and supporting garrisons, with the usual prodigality and waste of human lives, which attends West-Indian service, would far exceed the value of their possession. The voté of supply was, however, passed without a division.

Mr. Fox persevering in his efforts for the repeal of the shop-tax, was at last successful. After learning, from the contents of Mr. Fox's motion, that the oppressiveness of the tax was not a partial, but universal subject of discontent throughout the metropolis, the minister declared that he would not longer resist the repeal; and the obnoxious impost, the tax on pedlars, to the great satisfaction of all the industrious traders in London, Westminster, and Southwark, was done away. "

Mr. Beaufoy's renewed motion for the repeal of the corporation and test acts was debated in a very thinly-attended house, and, through the zealous resistance of Mr. Pitt and Lord North, again experienced rejection. The subject of the slave-trade was also resumed, and many facts, which deeply interested humanity, were brought before the house. By the concession of the friends of abolition, the question was at last suffered to lie over till the succeeding session; but the bill, which owed its introduction to Sir William Dolben, for regulating the transportation of

slaves from Africa, was by another vote continued and amended.

CHAP.
XXII.

1789.

In opening the budget of the year, Mr. Pitt drew a flattering picture of the national finances. He stated the annual income of the country to have amounted, on an average of two years, to £15,778,000. He stated the total of the supplies, voted for the current year, at £5,730,000, exclusive of renewed exchequer bills. As ways and means, he computed the land and malt tax at £2,750,000; a loan of £1,000,000; the profits on a lottery, £271,000; by short annuities, £191,000; from the consolidated fund, £1,530,000, making in all, £5,742,000.

Besides the loan for a million, it appeared, that there would be a necessity for new taxes, to the amount of £100,000; which the minister proposed to levy on newspapers, on cards and dice, on probates of will, and upon post-horses. This was to pay the interest of the borrowed million, and to make up the deficiency of the shop-tax which had been repealed. The prosperous description of the finances which had been held forth by the chancellor of the exchequer, was violently disputed by Mr. Sheridan. It was moved by that gentleman, that a new committee of finance should be formed, and pledged himself to substantiate, before an impartial audience, four important assertions, in direct contradiction to those of the minister; that the report of the committee in 1786 was neither founded in fact, nor verified by experiment: that for the three last years, the expenditure had exceeded the income two millions, and might be expected to do so for three years to come: that no progress had hitherto been made in the reduction of the national debt: and, that there was no ground for that expectation, without a considerable increase in the annual

CHAP.
XXII.

1789.

income, or reduction of the expences. On each of these allegations, Mr. Sheridan dwelt with extensive and minute illustration. The report of the committee of 1786 was defended by Mr. Secretary Grenville. The answer of ministers, when stripped of its financial calculations, amounted to this; that greater expences had been incurred than could have been expected; but that future years would undoubtedly prove less abundant in extraordinary demands,⁹ and by that approaching test they desired to be tried; that the income of the country was, in the meantime, increasing much beyond their calculations, and would soon overtop the expences. Mr. Sheridan's motion for a new committee was rejected.

The view of Indian finances was drawn in no less pleasing colours by the minister of that department. The excess of the revenue of the company, above the interest of their debt, was given at £1,367,000. A bill was, therefore, passed, with slight opposition, to enable the company to add one million to their capital.

A bill, which passed before the conclusion of the session, for subjecting tobacco to the duties of excise, instead of the customs, occasioned the most earnest petitions against the measure, from the manufacturers of that article. The remonstrances were heard for several days, by council, at the bar of the house. Besides the general hardships of extending the visitations of the excise, they endeavoured to establish the peculiar injury of submitting a manufactory, containing, in many processes, secrets highly valuable to the possessors, to the inspection of excise officers. The great variations in the weight of tobacco, if also urged, made

⁹ The extraordinary expences by the expences of the late armaments were occasioned by the continued wars, and several other circumstances to the American loyalists, &c.

it wholly unfit for being the subject of excise, since every variation of weather was known to affect it, in a manner, which the owner could neither remedy nor prevent. The bill, in its passage, was so altered and modified, as partially to remove the chief objections of the manufacturers.

The trial of Mr. Hastings proceeded during this session, but with no circumstance of memorable importance. An intemperate expression which escaped Mr. Burke, when in speaking (during one of his warmest philippics) of the execution of Nundcomar, he said, that Hastings had murdered that man through the hands of Sir Elijah Impey, was voted worthy of censure, by a great majority of the house. On the 11th of August, the chancellor, by his majesty's command, prorogued the parliament, after a session of almost nine months with little interruption.

The single successful campaign which Turkey had maintained against the emperor, was sadly compensated in the present year, by the return of good fortune to the Austrian standard. The death of Sultan Achmet the IV, a prince, who, though educated in the darkness of the seraglio, yet promised, by his superior abilities, to uphold, if not to renovate, that falling empire, placed a successor on the Ottoman throne, little fitted to prop its decline. One of the first acts of Sultan Selim, was to depose and murder the vizier Dus-suff Pacha, who had lately triumphed over the Austrian arms, and to appoint a new vizier, whose army was, in one day, put to total ruin, by the superior tactics of Cobourg and Suarrow. So decisive was this battle, which was fought on the plains of Martinesti, that the Turks lost 7,000 men, and with them seemed to lose, irrecoverably, their confidence and concert. The return of Marshal Laudon to the head of the Austrian armies,

CHAP.
XXII.

1789.

on the Hungarian and Croatian frontiers, was equally auspicious* to the imperial cause. Belgrade, the key of the Turkish frontiers, was taken with its numerous garrisons, and, in general, every place of importance in the same quarter, yielded to the Austrians, except Orsova, of which the garrison displayed so much gallantry, as to compel the veteran Laudon himself to raise the siege. In the eastern scene of the contest, the Russians were no less successful. The celebrated Hassan Bey, long distinguished as an admiral in the Ottoman wars, was imprudently transferred by the sultan to his land-service, and commanded the army of Bes-sarabia. After a hard fought battle, he was driven before the army of Prince Potemkin, out of that province, and the fate of Bender, its capital, was decided by the same engagement. Nothing but the approach of winter, seemed to protect Constantinople from the assault of the conquering enemies.

But, before the emperor Joseph had time to complete his triumphs over these barbarians, he was engaged in new difficulties with his own subjects, by that unhappy policy which inspired the first and last moments of his reign. The calm of accommodation in Flanders and Brabant was fallacious; for the promises which had quieted the people of those countries were, on the part of the sovereign, insincere. The people were suspicious; the emperor was indignant, that he had been obliged to accommodate and dissemble. The mask was therefore thrown off; conciliating governors were withdrawn, as a prelude to the change of conciliatory measures. Innovations on the freedom of the Belgians, and in violation of the *joyous entry*, were proclaimed to be the will of the emperor, when the council of Brabant were ordered to register as law, and the people, under penalty of death, to obey. The

council refused obedience, as well as subsidies, while the charter of their constitution should be outraged; the people shewed universal discontent. In these disgraceful scenes of innovation, where the emperor insulted the liberties of the Belgians, the first breach of his late accommodation took place at Louvain, where the institution of the university was changed for a capricious scheme of the reforming sovereign; and a defenceless crowd, who had assembled from curiosity more than sedition, were murdered in cold blood by the soldiers. From these and similar aggressions arose that sudden combination of the Belgians, by which, as if by magical incantation, an army of 40,000 men sprang up in an instant, and, with a career of success as rapid as it was short, overran the whole of Austrian Flanders. On the 22^d of December 1789, the states of Brabant, after solemnly renouncing allegiance to the emperor, appointed the leaders, who were to form the administration of the new republic. Of those leaders the most distinguished were, M. Vandernoot, a popular advocate of Antwerp, M. Van Euren, the baron D'Hore, and General Vanderschuerch, of whom the last was made commander of the army. A regular government was established, and diplomatic agents dispatched to treat with the powers of Europe, as from an independent state.

The rise, the progress, and the fall, of this revolution, form an interesting epoch in the later events of Europe; but, as it occasioned no armed interference on the part of England, it is but a secondary consideration in viewing the history of our own affairs. It is sufficient to say, that the popular government of Belgium, strong as it seemed to rise, endured for little more than a year. It fell by internal treachery, by dissension, by the

CHAP.
XXII.

1789.

bigotry of its church and people, and by the jealousy of its nobles; but the mortal circumstance of its fate was the return of those armies from the Turkish wars, which enabled Joseph to overwhelm the insurgents by numbers, as well as discipline. The succession of Leopold, however, to the imperial throne, was, from the mild and moderate character of that sovereign, as favourable to the humiliated circumstances of the Belgian patriots, as it was to the repose of Europe in a different quarter.

In the contest which had for some time agitated the eastern frontiers of Europe, the northern neighbours of the belligerent powers found themselves at last involved either as principals or arbitrators. While Denmark was induced, by threats or promises, to become the strict ally of Russia, Gustavus, king of Sweden, was ambitious of acting a more distinguished part, by checking the vast designs of Catharine, and restoring the once-powerful influence of his native country over the affairs of Europe. To this bold measure he was believed to be secretly stimulated by those cabinets who did not think it yet prudent to avow their sentiments openly, as well as by the state of his finances, and of his own dominions, and the critical relation in which he stood to Russia. The alliance of the Porte offered him a subsidy, which he was known to require; the mutinous state of his own people made a standing army indispensable for the support of his usurped authority; and, since it seemed possible, by the new alliance, to maintain the expences of a war, it was natural for the warlike and high-spirited activity of Gustavus to turn against that enemy of his person and kingdom, the empress of Russia, who at once threatened the independent existence of Sweden, and excited the factious spirit of its nobles against

1787

the sovereign, by the most dangerous cabals. Gustavus, seeking, when it was too late, to cement every ancient difference with Denmark, and detach her from her ancient alliance, went in person to the court of Copenhagen, in 1787, and aided his negotiations with all the powers of his eloquence; but he in vain attempted to change the tardy, though determined, resolution of the Danes. The defection of his army, and the resisting measures of the Swedish senate, who negotiated, during his absence from Stockholm, for a peace with Russia, seemed to crown his misfortunes; but the address of this able monarch, and his popularity among the lower classes of his subjects, protected him, for the present, from the hatred of his aristocracy.

In the following year, Prince Charles of Hesse, 1788. along with his nephew, the prince of Denmark, invaded Sweden on the side of Norway, and, advancing at the head of 12,000 auxiliaries, took Stromstadt, Udevella, and several other places. His campaign was distinguished by no important engagement; but whatever loss was sustained chiefly fell upon the Swedes. The invading army proceeded to Gottenburg, a very wealthy town, but by no means fortified in proportion to its consequence. The governor of the place, and the inhabitants, seeing, on the one hand, all the horrors of siege and bombardment, carnage and conflagration, which, even in the event of victory, would leave them but the ashes of their property, and, on the other, a safe surrender, had determined to capitulate. But the sudden presence of Gustavus, who rode night and day on horseback alone, and with more than the speed of a courier, to Gottenburg, when he heard of its danger, changed the aspect of affairs, and raised the sentiments of the Swedes to something higher

CHAP.
XXII.

1786.

than selfish calculation. The governor was instantly displaced. The townsmen assembled, Gustavus reminded them of the ancient glory of the Swedish arms, and declared his own resolution of resisting the enemy to the last. He was determined never to fall alive into their hands, and demanded of his people to stand by him. The voluntary self-devotion of a sovereign was too strong an appeal to the Swedes to be resisted; they participated his heroism, and promised never to capitulate.

From this dreadful trial of their fidelity, and from the seemingly inevitable fate of being buried under the ruins of their town, the Swedes and their king were relieved by the intervention of the three mediating powers, to whom Sweden might certainly be said to owe the continuance of its political existence. England, Prussia, and Holland, united by a treaty of alliance, as already related, interfered to procure, first an armistice, and finally a peace, between the courts of Copenhagen and Stockholm. Mr. Elliot, the British minister, passed over from Copenhagen to Sweden, and acquainted the prince of Hesse and the Danish prince royal, of the firm determination of Prussia and Britain to invade Denmark, if hostilities were farther pursued. His zeal and abilities well suited to the necessary promptness of the occasion, and, seconded by the remonstrances of Baron Børche, the Prussian minister, procured an armistice, first for one month, and afterwards for half a year. The Danish army then withdrew into Norway, and peace with Denmark was restored.

Such was the situation of Sweden at the close of the year 1789. Gustavus being now at liberty to combat Russia alone, opened the campaign in Finland, in the summer of the following year, and on the 25th of June distinguished the Swedish

arms by a brilliant victory, against superior numbers. He penetrated into Russian Finland with great spirit, and for some time with every appearance of success, till the increasing forces of the Russians, and the destruction of a fleet, which co-operated with his army by its movements along the coast, compelled him, at the approach of winter, to retire with considerable disadvantage; and the projects of conquest, too vast for the limited power of his small kingdom, vanished.

CHAP. XXIII.

*Rise of the French revolution.... Assembly of the notables....
 Disputes between the king and the parliament of Paris....
 Assembly of the states-general.... Assumption of power by
 the tiers-etat.... The king compelled to advise the union of
 orders.... New jealousies between the court and the popu-
 lar party.... Assembling of troops near the capital....
 Insurrection of the Parisians.... Capture of the Bastile....
 Proceedings of the English parliament.... Dispute with
 Spain respecting the settlement of Nootka sound.... Arma-
 ment for war.... Adjustment of the dispute.... View of
 affairs in France after the capture of the Bastile.... State
 of the rest of Europe in 1790.*

CHAP.
XXIII.
1786.

THE view of coeval circumstances, forces at this period upon our notice an event, which has since too fatally involved the fate of Europe in the vortex of its effects. We have deferred advert- ing to that event, till the period when its his- tory becomes more nearly connected with our own. To trace the causes of the great revolu- tion now begun and proceeding in France, would involve the task of reviewing many preceding reigns, during which the royal power had accu- mulated a mass of political grievances by its usurpations, and a burden of public debt by its ex- travagant expenditure, which became at last too great to be endured. It was in vain, that on the accession of Louis XVI. to the throne, the good intentions of the prince, seconded by consum- mate abilities in his first cabinet, had endeavoured to avert the revolution by relaxing the oppres- sions of the lower orders, and restoring economy to the management of the finances. The reform-

ations of the great and good Turgot, were arrested by his dismissal from the cabinet, at the instance of Maria Antoinette, when that unfortunate woman first assumed an influence in the cabinet, so fatal to France and to herself. After the war in behalf of America, the celebrity of Neckar for financial ability, his integrity as a man, and his attachment to philanthropic principles, promised a renovation of the hopes that had been cherished under the influence of Turgot. But Neckar was dismissed and disgraced by the same agency which had displaced Turgot. He was succeeded, after a few changes, by Calonne, a politician who, in his financial character, was accused of empiricism, and in his personal character, of dishonest complaisance to the most corrupt profligacies of the court.

The loans and the taxes of Calonne proving ineffectual to ward off the prospect of national insolvency, the king and his minister were driven to attempt the only expedient that remained for propping the ruinous fabric of public credit. It was to induce the privileged orders, the nobility, and clergy, to surrender their usurpation, and contribute, with the rest of the people, to the payment of public burdens. This consent, however, could only be obtained by the convocation of the notables, an assembly so called from the dignity of its members, and who were nominated by the sovereign, but in their meeting, bore a certain resemblance to the ancient *parlements*, the memory of which was still dear in France. The proclamation for assembling the notables, was issued in December 1784. The writs were directed to seven princes of the blood, four dukes and peers of France, eight high nobles, twenty-two nobles, eight counsellors of state, four masters of requests, eleven archbishops and bishops, thirty-seven judges

CHAP.
XXIII

1787.

of parliament, twelve deputies of the pays d'état, the lieutenants civil, and twenty-five magistrates of different towns; in all 144.

On the 22^d of February 1787, the assembly of the notables was opened, with great pomp, in presence of the king, and all the princes of the blood. The deficiencies of the revenue were laid before them, it was recommended to the clergy and nobility, to make a voluntary resignation of their immunity from the national land-tax; and ministers declared the intention of his majesty to mortgage the domains of the crown, and to subject the landed property of the church to certain regulations, which should make them productive of aids to the public income. But with all the pains that had been taken to procure a majority in the assembly of the notables to second the king's intentions, unexpected opposition sprung up. On one side Calonne was beset by the popular leader Count Mirabeau, and on the other, by the baron de Breteuil, who was the favourite of the queen. The latter party prevailed in placing the archbishop of Toulouse, in the high office of Calonne, as controulergeneral of the finances. The notables were dissolved without producing any other decisive effect, than accomplishing the ruin of the minister who had convened them, by drawing out an exposure of the dreadful deficiencies in the finances; and without being able to reconcile the privileged orders to that equalization of taxes which had been proposed. Calonne fell in disgrace, and took refuge in England from a storm of popular odium, which was gathering over his head.

The new minister, less adventurous than Calonne, was, however, obliged by the pressure of circumstances, to apply himself to the raising of money for the immediate exigencies of the government. The taxes were to be, a double point, not

a third-twentieth on property, and a stamp-duty, and these he attempted to levy in the ancient manner of raising supplies by royal edict. Here, however, the most formidable obstacles arose. The Public Opinion, now deeply imbued with speculative sentiments of liberty,—sentiments long inculcated and cherished during the latter part of the century, by writers of the highest reputation,—sentiments in no small degree strengthened by the living example of the British constitution, and kept in exercise by occasional disputes, which subsisted between the parliaments and the sovereign of France, had loudly called for an assemblage of the states-general of the kingdom, as the only lawful mode of imposing taxes on the people. In favour of this convocation, the patriots of France quoted their own ancient constitution, which had once been endowed with representative freedom like our own, till the disuse of the states-general had confirmed the despotism of the crown.

In the parliament of Paris, after successive agitations of the question, a patriotic majority was at last formed, in favour of calling the states-general, and a most obstinate resistance was offered to the taxes proposed for them to register. The same august body also demanded, that a true state of the finances should be laid before them, and an explanation of the purposes to which the sums in question were to be applied.

To compel his parliament to register the taxes, Louis was obliged to adopt the unpopular measure of holding a bed of justice, or solemn assembly of the whole parliament. It was at this occasion, while he compelled the resistance to register the edicts, that the blood of the prince of the blood entered the revolution. He had hitherto maintained, and which he never reversed. After the

CHAP.
XII.

1777.

CHAP.

VIII

1787.

president of the parliament had summed up, in a spirited speech, the reasons on which the assembly had grounded its refusal to register the stamp-tax, the count d'Artois passionately exclaimed,—‘ If I were king, they should comply.’ The president, making a low bow, replied,—‘ If you were king, sir, I should say what I now say ; my heart is the people’s, my understanding is my own, and my head is the king’s.

The parliament entered a spirited protest against this violation of their records. They were banished, in consequence, to Troyes ; but purchased their recal, by consenting to register the act for the third twentieth. The urgent necessities of the state, however, required greater supplies than could be obtained by this insincere reconciliation. On the 19th of November, the king repaired once more to the parliament, and ordered an edict to be registered for a loan of 450 millions of livres. Permission being given, however, for the members to deliver their sentiments on the loan, a very warm debate ensued, and was maintained, between the supporters of the royal and those of the patriotic party, for nine hours ; when the king, who had tasted no refreshment from the time of his entrance, overcome with hunger, and chagrined at the liberties which had been used in debate, rose and commanded the edict to be registered without farther delay, and without putting the question to the vote. The haughty order of the sovereign produced silence for a short time, till the duke of Orleans, who had openly declared himself on the popular side, rose and protested against such an infringement on the rights of the assembly. The parliament unanimously seconded his protest, and declared the proceedings of the day to be thereby rendered null and void.

The duke of Orleans, next day, received an

order from the king to confine himself to one of his seats, about fifteen leagues from Paris, and was prohibited intercourse with any person but his own family. Two members of parliament, who had distinguished themselves in opposing the edict, M. Freteau, and the Abbe Sabattiere, were, the same day, committed, by *lettres de cachet* to separate state prisons.

Far from being overawed by these acts of severity, the parliament again protested with greater boldness than before, and instead of appealing to the king's mercy for the release of their arrested members, demanded it *in the name of the people of France*. Recurring, on the subject of the taxes, to the ancient principles of the constitution, they declared that it was neither in their power, nor in the power of the crown, nor in both united, but in the power of the states-general alone, to grant or levy any new taxes on the people; a declaration which raised the parliament to the highest eminence in the popular estimation.

After much dispute, the crown seemed at last disposed to yield to the boldness of their antagonists, and the exiled members were set at liberty. A deep plan was, however, in secret agitation by the ministry, for diminishing the jurisdiction, the revenues, and the influence of the parliaments, by instituting a number of inferior courts of justice throughout the kingdom, under the denomination of grand bailywicks. Another part of the secret plan was to establish an assembly, which should supersede at once the necessity both of parliaments and of a convocation of the states-general, by appointing a *cour plénière* for registering the royal edicts.

1 The *cour plénière* was to have consisted of princes of the blood, great officers, and marshals of the court, and members of the grand parliaments, great officers, and marshals of the court, and members of finance.

CHAP.
XXIII.

1781

May 5.

The project was devised with such secrecy, that the royal edicts for assembling the *cour plénière* were printed, and on the eve of being issued, when it was discovered by a young member of the parliament of Paris, M. d'Espremenil. An extraordinary session of that assembly was immediately convoked on the 2^d of May, and several spirited resolutions were passed to oppose the unlawful measures of the court. Two days after, the member D'Espremenil, and another, M. Monsambert, who had made themselves peculiarly obnoxious to the court, were ordered to be arrested. They fled, for a sanctuary, to parliament; but that assembly was instantly surrounded by the king's troops. The commanding officer entered and demanded them, on which the president cried out, 'we are all D'Espremenils and Monsamberts!' At their own request, however, the two members were surrendered. The king soon after held a bed of justice, and ordered the edict for the *cour plénière* to be registered, and as the parliament still continued refractory, he suspended the meetings of such assemblies all over the kingdom.

But it was now too late to quiet the public mind by means of terror. The parliaments were too popular, and too powerful, to be set at defiance. Many of the patriotic noblemen, who were called upon to sit in the *cour plénière*, declined to be the instruments of an arbitrary proceeding. The provincial parliaments espoused the quarrel. The parliament of Paris, and the voice of the people was loudly on their side. Frequent riots and blood-shed, seemed to fore-bode a general convulsion over the kingdom, and the military shewed a disposition to side with the citizens, rather than

The nomination was to be left to nobody might have been as popular as the king, but, perhaps, in different circumstances, or the states general, and answered the purposes of the kingdom, this was a salutary purpose.

the court. In this alarming crisis, a change of ministers became a necessary sacrifice on the part of the court. Neckar was recalled, and it appeared that the summoning of the states, according to the advice of the parliaments, would be the only expedient left for averting bankruptcy from the funds. The idea of the *cour plénière* was, therefore, dropt for ever.

CHAP.
XXIII.
1788.

In the midst of his high hopes and popularity, Mr. Neckar was, however, aware of the embarrassments attending even this popular measure of convoking the states. If the privileged orders should retain a majority, the states would be little more than a convocation of notables, and the assembling of the notables for public relief was a measure which experience had shewn to be inadequate; if, on the other hand, the popular interests should prevail, innovation and unknown evils were to be dreaded. Previous to the meeting of the states-general, it was thought prudent to convoke another assembly of the notables, not to adjust the finances, but to deliberate on the grand representative plan, which was to be realized in the states-general. The subjects laid before them for consideration were, the composition of the states-general, including the important question of the number of the deputies, and the proportion of each order; the forms of convoking and electing them, and whether the tiers-etat or commons, should be allowed to choose representatives from either of the superior orders? The decision of the notables on the number of the deputies of the commons, was, that they should not exceed the number of either of the other two bodies. This decision might have possibly influenced Neckar to coincide with it, had not the voice of the nation been manifestly hostile to the preponderance of the privileged ranks. The opinion of the public,

CHAP.
XXIII.

1789.

so strongly expressed in writings and in conversation, finally prevailed; and Neckar, embracing the popular side, procured an order of council, contrary to the resolution of the late assembly of notables, declaring that the deputies to the states-general should, at least, amount to 1000; that the number sent by each bailiwick, should be in a ratio compounded of its population and taxes, and that the members of the tiers-etat should be equal to the joint amount of the other two orders. The meeting of this assembly, on which the eyes of all Europe were to be fixed, was appointed for the 1st of May 1789.

The sublime spectacle of the assembling this representative body, took place on the day appointed, at Versailles. The nobility, equipt in the gorgeous habits of the days of chivalry, the dignified clergy, in all the highest pomp of ecclesiastical apparel, led the procession towards their hall. The third estate, affecting simplicity of habit, and dressed in the black woollen mantles worn in the days of Philip le Bel, followed, amidst the acclamations of the people.

The grand question, respecting the voting by order or by poll, was the first which agitated the assembly, the deputies of the privileged orders insisting, that the verification of their powers² should take place in their separate chambers, whilst the third estate contended for the ceremony taking place in the common hall of their meeting. The nobility continued as obstinate in resisting this proposal, as the commons in demanding it, while the clergy seemed more moderate, and desired the reconciliation of the orders. At last the commons, in pursuance of a resolution dictated by the advice of Sieyès, proceeded to make a general call of all

² Which corresponds to the ceremony of our members taking their seats.

the deputies from the whole bailiwicks of France, including those of the privileged orders, and by a decisive step, assumed the legislative authority, under the name of the *National Assembly*. Mr. Bailly was appointed their first and temporary president. The first resolution of the assembly pronounced all taxes, which were not sanctioned by the representatives of the people, illegal; but gave a temporary sanction to the existing taxes, and declared the public creditors to be under the protection of the honour and faith of the nation. The deputies of the other orders were dismayed, irritated, and divided, by these proceedings. In the nobles, a democratical minority, headed by the duke of Orleans, contended for yielding to the tiers-etat; but the majority persisted against him.

In the ecclesiastical, as well as in the noble chamber, there was a strong aristocratical party; but in the former, the number of the curés and smaller clergy, who attached themselves to the popular cause, more immediately prevailed.

On the 20th of June, when the clergy were to form an union with the commons, the king, who had been induced, during the accidental absence of Neckar, to proclaim a royal session, gave orders to surround the hall of the states-general, with a detachment of guards. The president, and members of the tiers-etat, who came to take their seats, were not permitted to enter. On this they adjourned to a tennis-court in the neighbourhood, where they bound themselves, by a solemn oath, never to separate, till they should give to France a free constitution.

On the 22^d, the same patriotic body again met, but could find no place for deliberation; till they

Mr. Neckar was called away from court to pay his last visit to a dying sister.

took shelter in the church of St. Louis, where they were joined by a majority of the clergy, and two nobles of Dauphiny. On the succeeding day, the royal session, which had been prorogued, took place, and the tiers-etat took their seats as at the first meeting of the states. Neckar was still absent, and the speech of the king betrayed the unpopular influence which had been employed in the interval. The resolution of the 17th, by which the commons had assumed the right of constituting a legislature, was declared null and void by the king; the deputies were ordered to separate, and appear before him next day. His majesty retired, and was followed by the nobles, and the minority of the clergy, but the commons remained motionless; while the workmen, who had received orders to take down the throne and other decorations, were so overawed by their presence, that they could not execute the task. The grand master of the ceremonies returned to the hall, and demanded of the assembly, if they had not heard the king's orders? but he soon retired in confusion, on receiving the authoritative reprimand of Mirabeau. On the following day, the minority of the nobles, with several of the superior clergy, joined the national assembly; and on the 27th, the king sent a pressing letter to the nobility and the minority of the clergy, intimating the necessity of an union of orders, and entreating them to agree to it. The recommendation was obeyed, and occasioned so universal a joy, that Paris and Versailles were illuminated.

The triumph of the popular party now appeared to be complete, and the sacrifices of the court seemed to be dictated by the most complete conviction of their inability to maintain the struggle any longer with so decided a majority of the nation; yet the seeds of jealousy were not eradicated.

CHAP.
XXIII.
1789.

ed. Paris continued to exhibit scenes of tumultuous excess, and the soldiery, seduced by the contagion of popular feelings, or debauched by the secret bribes of Orleans, threw off subordination and discipline. The disorderly state of Paris seemed, in the eyes of the court, to justify the collection of regular troops to its neighbourhood, among whom, the people and the assembly remarked, with jealousy, that the majority of the regiments were composed of, and commanded by, foreigners. The circumstance of Neckar's dismissal, and a new administration being formed under De Breteuil, Foulon, La Calésiere, La Porte, and the marshal Broglio, men avowedly of aristocratical principles, completed the belief of the Parisians, that deep designs were in agitation, for overwhelming their liberty, and dismissing their representatives.

On Sunday the 12th of July, the news of the ministerial change, and rumours of hostile designs being in agitation by the court, were reported, and occasioned an outcry of despair and fury. Insurrection prevailed in every quarter; the multitude, unprovided with any regular supply of arms, rushed into the armourers' shops, and seized all the fire-arms and swords that could be found. In the skirmishes that took place, the citizens were victorious, being joined by the French guards, who repaired to them in a body.

An accidental circumstance accelerated the fate of the revolution. A scarcity, approaching to famine, had menaced the capital; and a band of insurgents availing themselves of that pretext, had commenced pillage, and even murder, on the unof-

* While the multitude, on their first rising, were attacked by a patrol of the royal *allemande*, an old man, who was said to be an innocent spectator, was cut down in the garden of the *Thuleries*, according to report, by the prince de Lambes; a slight circumstance, but which was said to have roused the rage of the Parisians to the highest pitch.

CHAP.
XIII.

1789.

fending inhabitants. Mirabeau seized this opportunity to make the Parisians form themselves into a militia, for maintaining order. His suggestion was followed, and 60,000 citizens were immediately embodied. The national volunteers, directed by popular leaders, in a few hours, assumed some appearance of order and discipline; they threw up entrenchments, and formed barricadoes, in different parts of the suburbs. A permanent council sat night and day at the hotel de ville, and a communication was established between this army and the national assembly. This momentous change took place on the 12th and 13th of July.

On the following ever-memorable day, the insurgent citizens, aided by numerous companies of the guards, attacked and carried the *hotel des invalids*, and the *guard meuble*, or ancient armory, from whence they distributed abundance of arms and ammunition to their numerous adherents. An unknown voice was heard to call out, 'Let us march against the Bastile.' The name of that abhorred receptacle of the victims of tyranny, operated like a spell on the inflamed spirits of the multitude; and the bastile, which had resisted the great Conde during a siege of twenty-three days, was stormed by undisciplined insurgents in a few hours.

The capture of the bastile has been called the birth-day of the revolution; it was the signal for all the partizans of the ancient aristocracy, who were not devoted, either to fall with the king, or to submit to the new order of things, to abandon the kingdom. The count d'Artois, presumptive heir to the crown, escaped with his two sons; the princes of Conti and Condé, and many of the first nobility, quickly followed.

The day after this event, the king repaired, without his guards, to the assembly. His appearance was

not now that of the haughty monarch, who had lately dictated to the states-general; it was all prostration and concession. He intimated that the foreign troops were to be withdrawn. Neckar was also recalled, in compliance with the wishes of the assembly. That minister, who had retired to Switzerland, returned amidst the acclamations of the country; but he had occasion to witness, even on his triumphant re-entry, traits of that sanguinary spirit among the people, which had already begun, and too long continued, to mark the progress of the revolution. The first solemn act of the assembly, after the return of their popular minister, was to frame the declaration of the rights of man, which was meant to contain the leading principles of the new constitution.

The British parliament met on the 21st of January 1790. The speech from the throne, from the want of important matter, was answered without any division upon the address; and the estimates for the military establishments were voted, after a short debate. Sir Grey Cooper, Mr. Mars-
ham, and Mr. Fox, expressed their astonishment, that after eight years of peace had elapsed, the military estimates were not yet reduced even to the peace establishment of 1775, though the committee of finance, which sat in the year 1786, had presumed upon a still greater reduction. Mr. Pitt declared, that it would be found, upon examination in detail of our military establishments, that they could not, with common prudence, be reduced to a narrower scale; that at present, though there was neither prospect nor apprehension of immediate war, yet the unsettled state of Europe required us to beware of parsimony, in case of sudden surprise; and, lastly, that our foreign alliances made it incumbent upon us to support them, in case of need, with effectual assistance.

CHAP.
XXII.

1790.

On the 9th of February, when the military estimates were brought from the committee, the observations that fell from the chief speakers in the commons, formed rather a conversation on the French revolution, than a debate on British politics. The dispute arose from some expressions that fell from Mr. Fox, declaring his admiration of that event. Mr. Burke, with many eloquent compliments to the talents of his friend, spoke of the revolution as a deplorable event, which he wished no Englishman, and, least of all, so great a leader of the minds of Englishmen, to view without abhorrence. In what consisted this boasted revolution? France was in possession of a good constitution the day that the states-general met in separate orders. The business of Frenchmen, had they been good and wise, was to have secured the independence of those states, according to those orders, under the monarch on the throne. It was then their duty to redress grievances; but, instead of redressing grievances, they increased them; they destroyed all the balances and counterpoises that could keep a constitution in steadiness; they laid the axe to the root of all property and prosperity, by the principles which they had established, and by confiscating the possessions of the church. By that institute of anarchy, the declaration of the rights of man, they had destroyed every hold, or authority by opinion, on the minds of the people; and, if they succeeded, they would establish a democracy, or a mob of democracies, the very basest species of tyranny. He was sorry that this thing, called a revolution, should have been compared with the event called the revolution of England. What we did, was in fact a revolution, not made but prevented. In the stable fundamental parts of our constitution we made no alteration. We did not weaken the monarchy; perhaps we strengthened

it. An era of more improved domestic prosperity then commenced, and still continues not only unimpaired, but growing, under the wasting hand of time.

CHAP.
XXIII.
1790.

The speech of Mr. Burke was received with much applause. Mr. Fox, with no less ample acknowledgments of the high veneration in which he held the character of the last speaker, declared, that he could not retract the words of approbation which he uttered on the French revolution. Though he never should lend himself to support any cabal for introducing dangerous innovations in our own constitution, he could not go the length of declaring himself an enemy to every species of innovation. He considered the revolution of 1688 a case much more parallel to the French revolution than his right honourable friend had been willing to allow. The scenes of bloodshed and cruelty which had been acted in France, he deplored, with every friend to humanity; but was it to be wondered at (he asked) that a people broken loose from the yoke of despotism should not enjoy their emancipation with perfect moderation? Unsettled as their present situation was, still their present was preferable to their former condition, and the change would ultimately be for the advantage of the country.

Encouraged by the small majority which had rejected their petition last year, the English protestant dissenters thought of renewing their application for the revision of the test and corporation acts. On Tuesday the 2^d of March, Mr. Fox brought the subject before the house. He dwelt on the intolerant principles of the act, in a long and argumentative speech. Speculative opinions, he contended, were, in no instance, the fair standard by which the character or conduct of men.

CHAP.
XXIII

1790.

was to be judged. It had been the declared opinion of Mr. Pitt and the duke of Richmond, that the present parliament was an inadequate representation of the country; but it did not follow, from such an opinion, that Mr. Pitt or the duke of Richmond should be prevented from holding civil employments under government. If political opinions ought not to be disqualifications even in politics, how much more unjust must it be held to make religious doctrines disqualifications, not merely in religious, but in political, promotion. This was the very essence and practice of intolerance. Instead of being warned by the fate of a neighbouring kingdom (said Mr. Fox), we run headlong into the example. The Gallican church established disqualifications, and it fell by the very enemies which its own intolerance had created. It was our duty to beware of such a fate; but symptoms of the same spirit, he was sorry to observe, began already to be displayed by our own ecclesiastics. As an instance of this, he mentioned a proceeding of the bishop of S^t. David's, who had lately sent a circular letter to the clergy of his diocese, dissuading them, in the strongest manner, from voting for a certain member of the house, because he had supported the petition of the dissenters. The acts of which the dissenters complained (he said) had been framed on pretence of defending the church and the state; but the loyalty of the dissenters was proved by the history of those very events which secured the present family their seat on the British throne; and every argument against the revision of the acts, founded on the supposed disaffection of the present generation of that creed, was a false induction from the imprudent language of a few misguided individuals, not a fair inference from the conduct of the whole.

Mr. Pitt opposed the motion. In answer to Mr. Fox's avowed doctrine, that actions were the sole test by which the loyalty of subjects was to be tried, Mr. Pitt contended, that political prevention was one of the chief securities of the constitution, since it guarded the existence of the church, in the safety of which even our constitution was involved. The church was a part of the constitution, and that part could not be endangered, without the danger of the whole. He reminded the house, that it was to the same caution of political prevention that we owed our deliverance from the tyranny of the Stuarts, which, if it had not existed, might have left us, at this day, without a parliament to decide upon the question. The executive power (he continued), was entrusted by the constitution with the sole power of appointing to offices: it followed, by a natural inference, that they were also empowered to judge of the fitness or unfitness of individuals to occupy those stations. Hence, in a constitutional view, it could be deemed no hardship that certain disqualifications should be attached to opinions, which the discretionary power of the executive government considered it politic to impose. But the strongest argument of Mr. Pitt was founded on the very circumstance which the dissenters had held out as the main objection to the acts in question. It was said by the opposers of the test laws, that they were inefficacious and nugatory, as the house had been obliged to pass, every session, an act of indemnity. This certainly displayed, that if the test and corporation acts were remedies in the hands of the government for politic purposes, they had not been used with impolitic severity, but tempered with every possible degree of moderation. Were such a degree of moderation: were such a remedy, however, removed from their hands, where should a security

CHAP.
XXIII

1790.

be found, if the church were ever in danger? And of the danger to be apprehended from men of the avowed principles of the dissenters enjoying power in the state, there could be no question; for power always confers the desire of increasing it: and, if we suppose them honest, and true, to their principles, it necessarily follows, that they must wish to overthrow an hierarchy obnoxious to their most sacred tenets.

Mr. Burke said, he opposed the revision of the test laws, from a firm conviction that the dissenters were in general men of dangerous principles, actuated by no motives to which toleration could be at all applied. He produced several authentic documents to substantiate these allegations.⁵ He concluded his speech by declaring, that on account of the many alarming and suspicious circumstances with which the present application came presented to parliament, if the test and corporation acts were abolished, some other test ought to be substituted. Mr. Fox's motion was rejected.

On the 4th of March, Mr. Flood moved for leave to bring in a bill for amending the represent-

⁵ Amongst these was a catechism circulated among the dissenters, full of invectives upon national establishments, upon kings and bishops. Another was a letter written by Mr. Fletcher, a dissenter, from a meeting of dissenting ministers, held at Bolton in Lancashire. Mr. Fletcher stated, in his letter, that the meeting avowed such violent principles, that he could not stay, but came away, with some other moderate men. It asserted, that one member, on being asked, what was their object; and whether they meant to seek for any thing more than the repeal of the test and corporation acts? answered in the language of our Saviour, 'We know these

things, which ye are not yet able to bear.' And, on another member saying, 'Give them a little light into what ye intend,' they informed him, that they did not care the nip of a straw for the repeal of the test and corporation acts; but that they designed to try for the abolition of the tithes and liturgy. In addition to these documents, he read several well-known extracts from the writings of Doctors Priestley and Price, expressive of their hostility to all establishments; their persuasion, that those of religion were sinful and idolatrous; and their determination to proceed, step by step, till they demolished them. *Dodley's Ann. Reg.* chap. iv. 1799.

ation of the people in parliament. The principle of a free and representative government, Mr Flood affirmed, was, that the majority should decide for the whole; that nothing less than a constituent body, formed on a principle that extends to the majority, can be constitutionally adequate to represent the people in parliament. Instead of answering this principle of the constitution, the constituent body was wholly defective in point of number, since the majority of the representatives, who decide for the whole, are chosen by a number of electors not exceeding six or eight thousand, though these representatives are to act for eight or ten millions of people. Mr. Flood therefore proposed, as a reform in the constitution, that a new body of electors should be added to the present number, sufficient to accord with the spirit and purposes of liberty, and sufficient in property to be conducive to the cause of order; that 100 members should be added to parliament; and that they should be elected by the resident householders in every county. Mr. Windham combated the motion, because, instead of pointing out or applying to any specific grievance, it merely attacked the present mode of representation, without cause or apology. The representation had been called inadequate; but, instead of proving its inadequacy, the mover had only proved its being unequal; a fact which required no evidence, but by no means implied or included the previous assertion. It was confounding the end with the means, to propose an amendment of the representation, because the house as at present constituted, had been sufficient for all the beneficial purposes of government. 'But, if ever I were to approve' (said Mr. Windham) 'of parliamentary reform, it should not be now. I would never advise the repairing of a house in the hurricane season.

CHAP.
XXIII.
—
1790.

While speculators and visionaries are at work in a neighbouring kingdom, instead of catching the contagion of change, I would avoid every tendency to a subversion of established order, and calmly wait the event of what is passing, before we hazard all the fabric of the constitution by endeavouring to mend any part of it.' Mr. Pitt coincided with Mr. Windham on the necessity of delaying innovation till another period. Even as a friend to reform, he should not wish to see the cause suffer from being unseasonably advanced. Mr. Fox, although he candidly allowed that he believed this project of reform neither supported by the public opinion within nor without, yet thought that the plan proposed by Mr. Flood was the best he had heard suggested. He begged leave to differ entirely from the sentiments of Mr. Windham respecting France; and, following out his illustration of the hurricane season, contended that no season for the repair of a house could be more fit for amendment, than that in which the storm was ready to burst. Mr. Wilberforce, Mr. Courtney, Mr. Grenville, and several other members, spoke on the motion. At length Mr. Flood consented that it should be withdrawn.

On the 10th of March, a motion was made by Mr. Montague, for increasing the salary of the speaker of the house of commons. He stated his present emoluments, not exceeding £3000 a-year, to be inadequate to the dignity of his station, and proposed that they should be advanced to £5000. The motion was opposed by Mr. Hussey, as tending to increase the influence of the crown; but being supported by a large and respectable majority of the house, the original motion was not only carried, but an additional £1000 added as an amendment.

Subjects of finance and revenue now claimed

the attention of the house. On the 31st of March, Mr. Dundas opened the Indian budget: he dwelt upon the increasing prosperity of our possessions in the east, which he said would soon exceed every other part of Hindostan in trade and cultivation. In a few years the company would be enabled to pay off their arrears for the present year, the revenue considerably exceeded the product of the former; and by the system of justice, liberality, and clemency, now exerted by the British government over the natives, the increase of that revenue was likely to be permanent.

In displaying the state of finances for the year, the chancellor of the exchequer congratulated the house on being able to announce the increased prosperity of the nation. The exports of the preceding year, amounted to £18,500,000, of which, nearly £13,500,000 were British manufactures. The imports to £17,800,000; and the number of our seamen was increased to one third more than in 1783. The supplies were calculated at £11,931,000; the ways and means at £12,496,000, of this sum £6,500,000 being raised by exchequer bills, the amount of the revenue, for three years past, had been £15,723,000; but the actual produce of last year had exceeded this sum by half a million. The growing surplus of the consolidated fund might be, therefore, called £3,300,000, whilst £5,184,000, had been taken in the three per cents, from the national debt.

Mr. Sheridan disputed the truth of this flattering description of our finances exhibited by the minister. He challenged the minister to deny that the excess of three years expenditure, 1786-7-8, above our receipts, had been £6,000,000 in all. He concluded by declaring, that nothing would put the finances into a proper state, but either raising the income to the expenditure, or lowering the

CHAP.
XXIII.

1790.

expenditure to the income. The chancellor of the exchequer objected to the year 1786 being taken in, as one of the three years of average in this question. The fair period to be taken, was to end with the year 1790; before the conclusion of the year; it was unjust to anticipate what the balance would be.

From the happy prospects of peace and prosperity, the attention of the nation was suddenly called to the rumours and preparations of war with an ancient enemy. On the 5th of July, Mr. Pitt delivered a message to the house from his majesty, informing them of an aggression committed by the Spaniards on British subjects; of satisfaction having been refused by the court of Spain; of claims having been set up by that nation to the exclusive navigation of the south-western coasts of America, and of his majesty's decided resolution to maintain the honour of his crown, and the rights of his people. The hostility of Spain arose out of the following circumstances. For about three years, a commerce had subsisted between some private adventurers in India and those parts of the Western coast of North America, which Captain Cook and other British navigators had first discovered. A settlement had been formed at Nootka sound, (after a regular purchase of the land from the native Indians) the neighbourhood of which afforded furs, that sold for a high price in China. This lucrative trade was carried on for years without molestation, and without the slightest anticipation that Spain would set up a claim to countries, which hitherto never had been visited by Spaniards.

In the month of May 1789, two Spanish ships of war arrived in the sound; for some time mutual civilities passed between the British and Spanish officers; but on the 14th of May, Captain Douglas, of the *Iphigenia*, was ordered on board of the

Spaniards, and, to his astonishment, informed by the commander, that he had orders from the king of Spain to seize all ships that he might find upon that coast. The Spanish officer, Joseph Martinez, then took possession of the *Iphigenia*, and conveyed the officers and men on board the Spanish ships, where they were put in irons, and treated with other circumstances of severity. After sending the prisoners to a Spanish port, he pulled down the British flag from the main building of the settlement, declaring all the lands between Cape Horn and the 60° degree of north latitude on the western coast of America, to be the property of the Spanish king. Another British vessel was afterwards captured, the crews imprisoned, and the cargoes sold without formal condemnation. The first informations of these proceedings came to us from the Spaniards themselves. Their ambassador announced the seizure of the British ships, not for the purpose of excusing the act, but to request that their countrymen, in these quarters, might not again be put to the trouble of confiscating our vessels; but that all British trade and fishery, on the north-west regions of America, might be stopt as infringements on the property of the Spanish crown. Mr. Pitt, in stating these facts, said he wished to abstain from every expression of aggravation. The bare statement would induce a British house of commons to demand restitution to the individuals aggrieved, and satisfaction to the nation for an insult to its dignity. It was true that one of the vessels had been delivered up by the viceroy of Mexico; but no satisfaction to the nation had been given. The court of Spain had followed up this injury and insult, by claims of exclusive navigation, as unfounded as enormous, and to enforce their pretensions, were making preparations for war in all their ports. It would be

CHAP.
XXIII.

1790.

necessary, therefore, for the house to declare, in coincidence with his majesty's wishes, that, in case pacific attempts were unsuccessful, we should prepare for measures of force to obtain redress.

Mr. Fox was the first to rise, after this interesting communication of the minister, to express his hopes that the house would be unanimous in sending that address of promise to support his majesty in the present dispute, which, at the conclusion of his speech, Mr. Pitt had moved. He wished, however, to be informed how it had happened, that the minister, scarce a fortnight ago, should have given the house such a flattering account of the affairs of the country, and so many assurances of permanent peace, when he knew at that very moment of what had been done by the Spaniards, when he had already received the remonstrances of their minister, and was informed of their arming for war? Mr. Pitt replied, that when the budget was opened, ministers knew nothing of the facts, except what had been communicated in a vague uncertain manner, by the Spanish ambassador, and of their preparations, no alarming intelligence had been then divulged. Several motions for papers relative to the dispute with Spain, were made in both houses, but rejected on divisions. On the 18th of May, a vote of credit for £1,000,000, passed the house of commons without opposition. The British government now exhibited at once the firmness of its character in foreign negotiation, and the vastness of its resources in immediate preparations for war.

Upon the question of the Spanish rights to unlimited dominion on the western coast of America, which included Nootka sound, the British contended, that Spain having established her claim, neither by occupancy nor labour, had no right to

an immense territory which lay, by justice, open to the first industrious occupant. The resistance to this truth, which at first the Spaniards were inclined to make, was probably stimulated by the hopes of effectual aid from their ancient allies of the Bourbon house. But although the family compact was still maintained by France, and a vote, in compliance with necessity, passed by the national assembly for arming fourteen ships of the line, to co-operate, in case of a war, with the fleet of Spain, yet this measure on the side of the French, seemed rather to arise from a respect to the family treaty, than any wish to participate in the quarrel. The decree of the assembly expressed, that this armament was to be equipped solely on defensive principles. Indeed the views of the French legislators were turned to very different objects at this crisis of the revolution, than befriending the house of Spain, or humbling the power of the English, whose name was exceedingly popular among the leaders of the revolution, and the French people in general, at the commencement of their changes.

Notwithstanding this promise of support, his Spanish majesty continued to negotiate with the British government about the point which was in dispute between the two nations. At length, after a considerable time spent in discussions, both parties agreed to wave the question of right, for the present, and his catholic majesty consented, in satisfaction for the injury complained of, to order the restitution of the ships and settlements which had been taken possession of, and engaged to pay an indemnity to the owners, for the actual loss sustained. The subjects of both nations were to have free access to the coasts, lying to the north of the Spanish settlements, on the west of America.

The subject of the slave-trade was again moved

CHAP.
XXIII

1790.

by Mr. Wilberforce, very early this session. The evidence on the side of the planters was not heard to an end, till near the close, and the remaining time was employed in examining some additional witnesses, in favour of the abolition. The further consideration of the subject was then adjourned. Upon the 16th of February, the trial of Mr. Hastings was renewed in Westminster-hall, being the fifty-fifth day of the sitting of the court. The court, sat in this session, but thirteen days, in which the managers went through the charge relative to the receiving of presents. It was opened by Mr. Austruther, and the evidence summed up in a speech, which occupied two days sittings, by Mr. Fox. The court adjourned on the 9th of June, after its sixty-eighth day.

On the 14th of May, a vote was passed for giving to the illustrious family of the Penns of Pennsylvania, a compensation for the losses which their loyalty had incurred in America, amounting, as the chancellor of the exchequer stated, to half a million of money. £4,000 a-year was settled upon them and their heirs, to be paid out of the consolidated fund. On the 17th, another bill was carried without division, for assisting his majesty to grant, for twenty-one years, to Dr. Willis, a pension of £1000 a-year.

On the 10th of June, before the dispute with Spain had been yet decided, his majesty put an end to the session, and the next day this parliament, the 16th parliament of Great Britain, was dissolved by proclamation, after it had sat for seven sessions.

During the peace and prosperity of England, the progress of the French revolution continued to excite the interest, to inflame the curiosity, and divide the sentiments of politicians. The first solemn proceeding of the assembly, was to frame the declara-

tion of the rights, which was meant to contain the leading principles of the new constitution, that was to be given to France.

CHAP.
XXIII.

1790.

After publishing this compend of their politics, the attention of the assembly was directed to the formation of a constitutional code; but from this task they were called off for a while, by the more immediate evils by which the country was afflicted. A peasantry, degraded by ages of oppression, enjoyed their first liberty, as might be expected, in too many instances, only to abuse it; and the exercise of their vindictive retaliations on the aristocracy, were numerous and dreadful. It is true, however, that those excesses were by no means indiscriminate. The era was not yet come, when patriotic and humane noblemen could not find an asylum on their own estates; nor even of those who had deserved or acquired a contrary character was the proscription universal.

While the assembly was occupied in decrees for the restoration of order, a most generous zeal, for restoring the rights of the people, distinguished the patriotic nobles; and, by the enthusiasm which the example of the great excited, produced a voluntary surrender of privileges on the part of the whole aristocratic representatives, which deserved a better reward, than it received, from their country. The equalization of taxes, and the abolition of feudal usurpations, being proposed by the Viscount Noailles, and seconded by the duke d'Aiguillon. the privileged orders appeared to contend, who should make the most essential concessions. The whole of the feudal oppressions were abolished, and it was decreed, that all public burdens should be imposed on subjects in proportion to their property.

In a subsequent debate, it was suggested, that as tithes operated in the manner of a premium

CHAP.
XXIII.

1790.

against agriculture, and a tax upon industry, they should be instantly suppressed. This was opposed by the clergy, and by many of the more enlightened of the laity. The Abbe Sieyes, in particular, evinced with much legal knowledge, and logical precision, that tithes were not a tax imposed agreeably to the feudal system, but a single rent charge, laid upon their estates, by the original proprietors, for the maintenance of religion among their tenants and vassals; that the actual proprietors had purchased their estates subject to this rent charge; and that by transferring it from the hands of the clergy, to those of the landed proprietors only, the aristocratic interest alone would derive any benefit. The abbe concluded a most forcible speech, by this memorable sentence, 'If you wish to be free, begin by being just.'

During the remainder of the summer, the formation of the new constitution, already issued by the assembly, occupied the attention of the legislature. The limits of the monarchy were prescribed by a suspensive *veto*, which invested the king with the right of opposing any act of the assembly, during two legislatures. If a third legislature should persist in recommending a decree, the royal assent was to be conceded. In these debates, the more violent spirits of the assembly, supported by the popular love of innovation, prevailed over an opposite party, whose wisdom foresaw the dangers of unlimited change, and wished to approximate the constitution, as nearly as possible, to that which had given happiness to England, during so many years. Of the moderates, the most distinguished were Mounier, the duke de Liancourt, and Lally Tolendal. Mirabeau, during the progress of these innovations, became their convert; but it was the fate of the moderate party in France, for ever to acquire converts in the mo-

ment of their decline, when the weight of new partizans seemed rather to accelerate, than to prevent their downfal.

Political arrangements could neither remedy the deplorable state of the revenue, nor supply the capital with bread, which still continued under all the apprehensions, and some of the privations, of a famine. Such was the scarcity of money, in spite of ostentatious contributions and loans, which were offered at a fair interest, that the minister was obliged to resort to a procedure, from which his predecessors would have shrunk with timidity, in all the plenitude of power enjoyed by Colbert or Sully. It was to raise a tax of one fourth on the net income of every citizen in the kingdom. The proposition was passed into a decree, by a great majority of the assembly.

While Paris was afflicted with the real evils of scarcity, the discontent of the public mind, was aggravated by jealousies and alarms. The hesitation of the king to assent to the decrees of the 4th of August; and the abolition of tithes, the report of his intended escape to Metz, and the project ascribed to the court, of again investing the capital with an armed force, excited a dreadful ferment in Paris. This temper was roused from jealousy to rage, on the report of a transaction within the walls of the palace, which, though unpremeditated, and only the ebullition of a moment, forms an important date in the progressive misfortunes of that devoted royal family. The regiment of Flanders dragoons, having arrived at Versailles, their officers were entertained, according to the custom of military hospitality, by those of the life-guards, and the royal saloon was the scene of entertainment. When the guests were heated with wine, aristocratical toasts were given, and the popular toast of—the nation, was refused. At the close of the entertainment,

— Vol. II. X

CHAP.
XIII.

1790.

the grenadiers of the regiment of Flanders, and the Swiss chasseurs, were introduced. Soon after, the king and the queen, with the infant dauphin in her arms, entered the hall. The bands of music struck up the pathetic air of '*Richard, oh, my king!*' in allusion to the fallen fortunes of the monarch. The presence of a conciliating king, and of a queen in all the charms of beauty and maternal tenderness, the influence of music and wine, raised an unbounded enthusiasm. The ladies of the court distributed white ribbons, to be worn as the badge of royalty, and the national cockades were trodden under foot by the inebriated guests. It is not certain that the royal personages were conscious of this ill-timed indignity to the popular cause; but there is little room to suppose, that they were ignorant of it; or that their tacit permission did not merit in some degree the censure which it occasioned.

The report of this event raised a dreadful commotion in Paris. It began on the morning of the 5th of October, with the cry of—'bread.' In a short time, an armed multitude proceeded to Versailles, accompanied by the national guards, among whom their commander, La Fayette, thought proper to mingle, for the sake of moderating their fury by his influence. The presence of the general, it is probable, prevented many excesses, that might otherwise have ensued; but it was found impossible, entirely to restrain the brutality of the insurgents. The mob, chiefly the women, called out for vengeance on the queen, and part of them burst into the castle. Two of the body-guards fell a sacrifice to their fury at the entrance; an intrepid individual, of the same corps, saved the life of her majesty, by giving a timely alarm, till she escaped, and again made her appearance in the company of her consort and children, to whom

some tokens of respect were yet shewn. When their majesties shewed themselves at a balcony, a cry was raised among the multitude, 'to Paris, to Paris.' The king complied, and, accompanied by his family, was brought, in humiliating triumph, to his capital. An executioner attended on each side by the standard-bearers of the mob, who carried the heads of the murdered guardsmen, still streaming with blood, upon their pikes.

CHAP.
XXIII.
1790.

This burst of popular rage, while it humbled the monarch, shewed also, unequivocally, the ascendancy of that licentiousness, which would soon defy the legislature itself. Mounier, Lally Tolendal, and the most distinguished of the moderate party, retired in disgust from the assembly.

The assembly, however, proceeded with a shew of zeal and vigour, to model the new constitution; and to suppress the rising spirit of sedition, made some examples of severity towards the mob. Of these exertions in behalf of order, the most memorable was exhibited on the scene of the Champ de Mars, an event which unfortunately led to the disgrace of La Fayette, and the death of Bailly.

By the new constitution, the old Gothic divisions of France were laid aside, and the names of eighty-three departments substituted in their stead. The lettres de cachet, the sale of offices, the gabelle, and other obnoxious taxes, were done away. Monasteries and convents were suppressed. The territorial possessions of the church were assigned to the disposal of the nation, subjecting, however, the new possessors to the responsibility of maintaining the ministers of religion, as established by the constitution, and the monks, nuns, and paupers, whose support had depended on the church revenues. But the great and decisive feature of the new constitution, was the suppression of eve-

CHAP.
XXIII

1790.

ry order of nobility in their titles, privileges, and insignia. The decree which thus annihilated all distinction of rank, was welcomed by the French with enthusiasm; they did not foresee, that, from the ruins of nobility, which had ceased to be formidable, even before its last humiliation was decreed, a new aristocracy was to rise in the privileged orders of anarchy, ten thousand times more dreadful than that of their ancient oppressors.

Louis made no shew of resistance in accepting the new government; and on the anniversary of the capture of the Bastile, the king, the national assembly, and the armed citizens, took a solemn oath to maintain the constitution. The enthusiasm of the people, the splendid pomp, the magnitude of the occasion, gave a memorable solemnity to this fête in the Champ de Mars. But a retrospect of what has occurred since that day in France, will lead us to no favourable commentary on the permanence of national fidelity to the cause of freedom, however pompously announced, or religiously sworn.

The appearance of unanimity, which the festive day of the confederation exhibited, was but a delusive symptom of the divided and phrenzied mind of the people. Scarce had the solemnity been announced, when insurrection and massacre broke out in many parts of the kingdom. The nobility, discontented at the abolition of privileges, which they contended that their representatives in the assembly had no right to surrender, either stimulated their dependents to defy the new government, or fell victims themselves to the unbridled licentiousness of the peasantry. A strong body of the clergy refused to take the civic oath; and, by joining their influence with the noblesse, particularly in Brittany and Poitou, laid the seeds of that civil

war which, at no distant period, was destined to shake the foundation of the revolution.

CHAP.
XIII.

1790.

In the increasing distraction of parties, the once abundant popularity of Neckar, was no longer sufficient to support that minister in guiding the helm of affairs. By his retreat, and by the death of Mirabeau, whose support, like all those of the royal family, were destined to arrive too late, Louis was left without a counsellor, or rather abandoned to those advisers, whose unpopularity aggravated his own. Under these circumstances, the fatal flight to Varennes was undertaken, and its unhappy issue conducted Louis once again, a degraded captive, to his own capital.

The war between Russia and the Porte was still continued through the year 1790. The succession of a new vizier, also contributed, in no small degree, to counterbalance the successes of a late campaign in the Bannat of Transylvania, the only fortunate era in the history of that war, which Turkey alone maintained against the two most formidable of her neighbours. Hassan Ali Bey, a most distinguished officer in the Turkish service, being appointed vizier, the whole plan of the war, on the side of the Turks, was altered. It had been formerly determined to invade Austria, and to maintain only defensive hostilities against the Russians; by the new disposition of the Ottoman forces, the Russians were attacked, and only defensive operations were attempted against the emperor. The consequence was, that time and opportunity were given to the Austrians to rally, and invade with success; while the assaulting of the Russians on their own ground, was attended with defeat. To make up as far as possible, by alliance, for the losses of this campaign, the Porte concluded a treaty with the king of Prussia, by which his Prussian majesty engaged to co-operate with them for the

CHAP.
XXIII.

1790.

recovery of the Crimea, and for other territorial restitutions. The contracting parties agreed to make no peace, but under the mediation of England and Holland. The king of Prussia bound himself to guaranty, after the conclusion of the peace, all the possessions that should remain to the Porte, and to obtain the joint guarantee of England, Sweden, and Poland, to the same effect. Joseph, the emperor of Germany, died in the midst of his preparations for renewing the war. His brother and successor, Leopold, more temperate in ambition, more enlightened in his views, and with a pacific disposition, which will ever do honour to his memory, announced his sincere desire of coming to speedy accommodation.

As neither Turkey, nor Prussia, nor both united, seemed equal to resist so vast a disparity of their opponents, the intention of Austria to recede from this alliance, could not fail to be an important security against the danger of a total eversion. The Prussian minister, the celebrated Count Hartzberg, had secured the essential friendship and co-operation of England, with his own cabinet, at the same time, that the English minister, Mr. Ewart, acquired by his extraordinary exertions, an equal ascendancy for the interests of England in Prussia. Thus was formed the sextuple alliance between England, Holland, Prussia, Poland, the Porte, and Sweden; by which it was attempted to draw a chain of political protection, from the extremity of Great Britain, across Holland, the Prussian states, and others of inferior note in alliance with the Prussian interest, even to the shores of the Hellespont. Preparations for war were still continued; but amidst those preparations, a disposition for peace was visibly influencing the councils, both of Vienna and Berlin. Conferences were opened, on the 4th of June 1790, at Reichenbach, in Silesia,

for adjusting, under the auspices of Prussia, a peace between Austria and Turkey, and for settling, at the same time, the differences between Leopold and his subjects in the Netherlands. An armistice was accordingly concluded, and finally, in spite of every obstacle that was thrown in the way by the artifices of the court of Petersburg, a peace and convention were concluded between Austria and the Porte, on the ground, as it is styled in diplomatic language, of the '*status quo ante bellum.*' Through the exertions of the allied powers, the limits of these extensive empires were definitely arranged.

The authority of Leopold over his predecessor's revolted territories of the Netherlands, being recognized to him by the treaty of Reichenbach, the affairs of the confederated Belgian states, now seemed to be irretrievable. The march of 30,000 of the emperor's chosen troops into the Low countries, and the inability of the leading confederates to raise the necessary supplies, reduced them to consult their own safety in time, by accepting the offers which had been guaranteed by the three electing powers. Through the good interposition of England and her allies, and the moderate disposition of Leopold, the Belgians obtained, at the very moment of their submission to the Austrian arms, a new charter, of no inconsiderable consequence. Among many articles for securing the liberties of the people, there was one prohibiting, in a special manner, the levying of armies or taxes, or the establishment of laws without the consent of the states; as also the employment of the soldiery against the civil subject, unless in support of the laws, and at the formal requisition of the magistrate.

The only object that now remained for the total pacification of Europe was to reconcile the

CHAP. ambitious Catharine with the Porte, and to curb
XXIII. the designs which she was said to entertain, for
1790. the total subversion of that empire. For this
purpose, the cabinets of England and Prussia,
early and earnestly interfered.

CHAP. XXIV.

Russian armament. . . . Debates on the bill for the constitution of Canada. . . . Incidental mention of the French revolution. . . . Bill for the relief of the protesting catholic dissenters. . . . Application of the Scottish church for the abolition of the test act, as it regarded Scotland . . . Discussion of the Slave trade. . . . Finances of 1791. . . . Ferment in the public opinion during this year. . . . Riots at Birmingham. . . . Meeting of parliament in January 1792. . . . Bill past respecting libels. . . . Reforming societies. . . . Police bill for the metropolis. . . . Finances for 1792. . . . Embassy to China. . . . East-Indian war.

THE British parliament met in November 1790, CHAP.
XXIV.
1791. but it was not till the subsequent spring, that the issue of our proffered mediation with Russia, was formally announced.

In a message to both houses, on the 29th of March, his majesty informed them of his efforts, in concert with his allies, to produce a peace between Russia and the Porte, having been unsuccessful. In fact, the peace which Catharine had lately concluded with Sweden, left her at liberty to direct her whole strength against the Turks, who, though no longer exposed on the side of Austria, were still too weak to resist her. In 1790, Prince Potemkin had overpowered the strongest army of the Ottomans in Wallachia, and carried, by an ever-memorable assault, the key of the lower Danube, Ismael. The siege of that insular fortification was entrusted, by Potemkin, to the celebrated Suwarrow. It took place early in December 1790,

CHAP.
XXIV.

1791.

and was signalized by a massacre of the garrison, which too far exceeded the horrors of an ordinary siege. By the conquest of Ismael, a way was opened to the Russian arms, to the very gates of Constantinople, and their advanced posts had, in fact, arrived within a few days march of the Turkish capital, when the interference of foreign nations, although they could not humble the language of the czarina, yet, in fact, interrupted her career. At the conclusion of the convention of Reichenbach, the mediating powers had, in vain, endeavoured to bring the empress to peace with the Porte, on the same terms which Austria had admitted, viz. the *status ante bellum*. The Empress, said that haughty Autocratrix, makes peace and war by her own will, and will admit of no foreign interference between herself and her enemies. Alarmed, however, at the strength of the allied powers, and, above all, at the external relations, as well as the internal state of Poland, she announced her intention of demanding no farther cession from the Turks, but the town and dependency of Czackow, and the country of the Oczakow Tartars, situated between the Bog and the Dnieper.

We have seen by the events which led to the convention of Reichenbach, that the successor of Frederick had drawn a close alliance with Poland, and that Prussia, Holland, and Britain, had offered to mediate a peace in the east of Europe, soon after the fall of Oczakow in 1788. In the following summer, a new treaty with Prussia had secured to us an additional interest in the business of mediation, and our mediation was again renewed, though ineffectually offered, to the empress. Catharine not only rejected our interference, but seemed to have denounced a new war against another of our allies, Poland; having declared that the new arrangements in that republic were a violation of

the treaty by which she had guarantied its former government. The seeds of jealousy between England and Russia, had been abundantly sown by the armed neutrality of the north; and by every new event in the politics of Europe, they were fast rising to maturity. At the expiration of her commercial treaty with this country, Catharine refused to renew it, and while she loaded our merchants with additional duties, treated the French commerce with every indulgence. The quadruple alliance which she formed with France, Spain, and Denmark, gave boldness, as well as strength to her decisions, while the counter sextuple alliance, in which England must have borne the chief expences of a war, seemed but a doubtful balance to her power.

CHAP.
XXIV.

1791.

Such was the state of Europe, when the royal speech anticipated hostilities with Russia, and the minister proposed an address from parliament, to declare their intention of supporting our mediation by force. The necessity of supporting our ally, the king of Prussia, and of preserving the balance of Europe from being shaken to its foundation by the farther progress of the Russian armies, were supported by Mr. Pitt, with all the accustomed strength of his eloquence. Mr. Fox encountered the motion for address. He maintained that Prussia could not be endangered by the victories of the Russians over the Turks, and that whatever pride the empress might have shewn in declining a peace which we should dictate, yet that her offer to cede all her conquests between the Neister and the Danube, reserving only what she had gained between the Bog and the Dneiper, was a reasonable offer, considering the vast ascendancy of her arms. Mr. Burke, though he had sided with ministers on another important occasion, was in this question in unison with the opponents of the war, and it may

CHAP.
XXIV.

1791.

be said, with the majority of the nation. ‘Are we to plunge ourselves,’ said Mr. Burke, ‘into war, into bloodshed, debt and calamity, for the disputed possession of a distant territory, which is either a desert, or the haunt of people oppressed by the yoke of savages? Are we to lavish the lives of Englishmen, that christian nations should be brought back to the dominion of infidels, whose expulsion from Europe would be a blessing, as their empire is now a scourge to those quarters?’ The majority of the minister’s votes was still retained; but it fell, in this question, much below its accustomed number. Encouraged by the voice of public opinion on this subject, both within and without parliament, Mr. Grey proposed a vote of censure on ministers, for their precipitate projects respecting Russia; his motion was negatived by a majority of only 80. Whatever judgment may be passed on the consistency of the minister, in giving way to popular opinion, and receding from this armed mediation, after a fleet had been equipped, and the expence of large preparations incurred, it is certain, that our interference was withdrawn, as precipitately as it had been offered.

Prussia and Turkey were advised to conclude a peace with the empress, on terms which she had proposed. By a peace suddenly concluded at Galata, on the 11th of August 1791, Russia retained Oczakow, and the country between the Bog and the Dnieper, which had belonged to Turkey before the war. The latter of these rivers was to be the boundary of both powers, each of whom were to be equally entitled to the free navigation of the river, and each to erect fortifications on their respective shores.

The subject of the Russian armament was dropped for the present session, but was resumed during the next, in both houses, as a matter of serious

crimination against the minister. Before our armament had commenced, said the accusers of ministry, her imperial majesty had declared the terms upon which alone she would consent to make peace with the Turks. After a campaign of astonishing success, and a peace concluded with Sweden, she still adhered to the same terms, and never offered to rise beyond them; an armament was thereafter equipped, a ten months negotiation took place. What did both of them produce? The negotiation, ended by accepting those very terms which the empress had all along proffered. The British ministry declared, after all their threats, that if the Turks did not accept these terms, the belligerent parties should be left to decide the quarrel by themselves; a procedure which had sunk us in the estimation of all Europe. Ministers could only answer to these weighty asseverations, that the empress, whatever her professions were, had held the overthrow of the Turkish empire in serious contemplation; that her armies were sufficient to have accomplished her desire, had not Britain and Prussia set bounds to her ambition; that although the terms of peace which she offered subsequently to her later successes were more moderate than could have been expected, yet, that foreign interference, and not her own disposition, had taught her moderation. So much at least had been accomplished by our late armament, that be-

Russia had acquired nothing. If the entire humiliation of her ambition had not been accomplished by a stricter abridgement of her conquests, it was to the clamours of opposition, and the clamours of the country, that Britain owed the want of absolute efficiency to her mediatory projects.

One of the principal objects which had been re-

CHAP.
XXIV.

1791.

commended to the attention of parliament, in the opening speech of the session, was the formation of a new constitution for the province of Canada. Since the acquisition of that territory by Britain, in 1763, frequent promises had been made to the British Canadians of extending to them the blessings of the British constitution. The French Canadians, on the other hand, either because they were universally attached to their old establishments, or that the voice of their aristocracy, who possessed feudal privileges at variance with the free spirit of our government, had been alone attended to, appeared averse to any change of their constitution. In framing the bill for the new Canadian constitution, attention was therefore paid to the different interests and prejudices of the two classes of inhabitants, and one of its principal features was the separation of Canada into its French and English divisions, or Upper and Lower Canada, to each of which a separate legislature was assigned. The provincial assemblies were to be septennial, and elected by possessors of freeholds in the country, or of tenants of houses in the towns, whose rents amounted to a certain sum. The powers of the governor, as in other provincial governments, were similar to those of a viceroy; but the formation of a legislative council, who were to be hereditary, or for life, at the option of the king, came nearer in approach to the form of the British government than any colonial government at present exhibited. The clergy were allowed one seventh of the land, in lieu of tithes, and a bishop of the English church was to be nominated by the crown. Internal taxation was completely renounced by our government. The external regulation of trade and commerce was alone reserved; and even against the abuse of this power a remedy was provided,

by assigning to the legislatures of the two provinces the right of levying and imposing public burdens of every description.

CHAP.
XXIV.

1791.

The bill passed through both houses without material alterations; but the debate was memorable for the extraneous topics which it introduced, and for the final separation which it occasioned between the two distinguished orators, who had hitherto been the joint leaders of opposition. Mr. Fox, in proposing amendments to the bill, expressed his hopes, that the house, in promulgating a new constitution, would keep in view those enlightened principles of freedom, which had already made a rapid progress, and were hastening to become universal. He objected to the proposed representation, as being too scanty; to the division of the country into provinces, which would retard the coalition of the French and English; to the establishment of the clergy, which was enormous; and to the mode of electing the council, which, he thought, should be elected by the assembly. He meant not, he said, to discuss the general utility of hereditary powers, and titles attending hereditary possessions; but, though he did not think it prudent that they should be destroyed, in kingdoms where they had already formed a part of the constitution, he conceived it unwise to give them birth in countries where they had not previously existed. He could not account for the creation of a new estate in the Canadian constitution, unless by supposing that an opportunity was sought of reviving those French titles and honours, and awakening in the west that spirit of chivalry, of which the extinction in a neighbouring kingdom had been so much lamented by a class of politicians in Britain.

Mr. Fox's allusions to the changes in France were not forgot by Mr. Burke, whose book on the

CHAP.
XXIV.

1791.

revolution had already appeared. The eulogies of his former friend on a system which he had so warmly combated, appeared to wound him as a personal insult, and the adoption of those principles, on which the changes in France had been adopted, seemed so baneful to the peace of society, that he inveighed against the revolution with all the ardour peculiar to his eloquence. He had been falsely accused, he said, of abusing republics, for the purpose of recommending monarchy; but he affirmed, that he never had abused a republic, ancient or modern. France deserved not to be called a republic, any more than a monarchy. He knew not by what name to describe it. Its shape—

(If shape it could be called), which shape had none,
Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb,
The likeness of a kingly crown had on.

But it was the spectre of monarchy, and not the substance; it was fierce as ten furies, horrible as hell, and had the hell-hounds of sin for ever barking around its presence. The evil of its principles, he affirmed, were not confined to France; they had infected the loyalty of Englishmen, and nourished a desperate faction, whose determination was to undermine and overthrow the constitution. Of the existence of this faction, Mr. Burke solemnly warned the house, although, when called upon to bring forward proofs of such a conspiracy, he had only general and vague allegations to repeat. Mr. Fox, conceiving the charge of faction to be leveled, by this undefined application, against all who had wished well to the revolution, rose to vindicate his principles from the charge of disaffection to the British constitution. He had rejoiced, he said, as a friend to the human species, in the downfall of a tyranny among 25,000,000 of human beings; but he praised the French revolution

for abolishing the ancient system, not for that which they had put in its place. Much must necessarily remain to be done, for bringing to peace and utility the elements of a government so little confirmed by experience. Yet, if it was a crime to rejoice in the prospect of liberty to so many millions, he must plead the principles of the English constitution as his excuse; those very principles which he had imbibed, with reverence, from the speeches, from the writings, and from the inestimable conversation, of the great statesman to whom he now replied. To hear those principles now abandoned by his illustrious friend, he confessed, had no less grieved than astonished him. During the American war, they had felt and owned a common sympathy upon subjects of politics analogous to the present. They had rejoiced at the successes of Washington, and wept over the fate of Montgomery. In the opinion of that house, in 1780, the influence of the crown had increased, was increasing, and ought to be diminished. To this opinion his right honourable friend had subscribed. If the influence of the British crown was thought dangerous, what, in the eyes of reflecting Frenchmen, must the influence of the crown of France have appeared? Mr. Burke, in reply, complained heavily of the charge of inconsistency and the abandonment of former principles, aggravated, as it was, by the circumstance of its being brought forward by one with whom he had lived in friendship and intimacy for two-and-twenty years. He vindicated his opinion of the French revolution, by distinguishing its whole nature and scope from that of America. But, in this attempt, he did not defend his consistency with his usual felicity of style or thought; the reproach seemed to have pierced deep, and he gave way to plaintive expressions of pain. He mentioned his age, his services;

(HAP.
XXIV.

1791.

the hardship of being libelled before the public by his friend, the self-devotion of his conduct, in sacrificing both private friendship and party support to the safety of his country, and resisting revolutionary opinions; but he concluded by declaring, that in what he had said on the subject of French principles, he made no allusion whatever to the speeches of Mr. Fox.

Mr. Fox rose in great agitation: his utterance was for sometime impeded by tears. He warmly expressed his hopes, that whatever he had said in the intemperance of debate would be forgot by his friend, whom, he found, that in spite of all his harshness, he must still love. But he could not help perceiving, that his right honourable friend now displayed something more than mere difference of opinion; he seemed to discover a secret wish and disposition essentially to injure him. Granting that he had been indiscreet and warm in the terms of his opinion of the French revolution, surely this did not deserve the severe and pointed epithets which had been applied. Mr. Burke said, loud enough to be heard, that he did not recollect having used any such epithets. If, said Mr. Fox, (with great presence of mind, and an happy application of this circumstance) my right honourable friend does not recollect the epithets, then neither do I. If they are out of his mind, they are out of mine also. This rejoinder of Mr. Fox, though begun with great respect and affection, led him once more into the subject of dispute, and in taking a comprehensive view of the inconsistencies which he could not but remark in the conduct of his political preceptor, his speech assumed, in its progress, an air of deep and sarcastic severity. The substance of this speech, though tempered with a concluding declaration, that this difference in their politics should only be a temporary bar to

their meeting, but not to their Friendship, drew from Mr. Burke such an answer as necessarily dissolved both their friendship and acquaintance.

CHAP.
XXIV.

1791.

The Canadian bill, after undergoing several alterations, passed the house of commons on the 18th of May. The principal of these alterations were, the increase of the number of the assembly in Lower Canada to fifty, instead of thirty, and the limitation of the assembly to four years, instead of seven.

Some salutary reformations in the practical laws of the country engaged the attention of parliament, after these unprofitable speculations on foreign affairs. Of the most important of these, viz. the bill on the law of libels, we shall have soon an occasion to detail the particulars, under the events of the following year. Another bill was passed, which, originating with the minority, and supported, with honourable liberality, by the minister and many of his friends, had for its object to secure the rights of elections, and to prevent vexatious prosecutions for political purposes. A law was enacted, prohibiting the attorney-general, in the right of the crown, or any individual in his own right, from disturbing the possessor of any franchise.

A bill was also passed for the conditional relief of those catholic dissenters, who, although adhering to the Romish faith, protested against the more odious and dangerous opinions imputed to papists. The bill was introduced by the solicitor-general, Feb 26
Mr. Mitford, and was seconded by Mr. Windham. The intention of the bill was not to repeal all the penal statutes against catholics, but to produce such an exemption as should admit men of honour and loyalty to the fair protection of the laws. To that description of the Romish church, who entitled themselves the protesting catholic dissenters, and

CHAP.
XXIV.

1791.

who abjured, the benefits of the present act were exclusively applied.* The oath to be administered for the new test was nearly the same as that which was ordained for the Irish catholics in 1746.

From the tolerating spirit which displayed itself on this occasion, the members of the Scottish church conceived it a favourable occasion to apply for a repeal of the test act, as far as it regarded Scotland; and a petition to the house to this effect, from the general assembly of Scotland, was eloquently supported by Sir Gilbert Elliot. In support of the motion, it was urged, that Scotland, by its constitution, and the treaty of union, had a separate form of religion, an independent church, and a free communication of civil rights. But a test, which is a condition for attaining those civil rights, imposed on Scotchmen the necessity of departing from the form of their religion, and either abridged their religious liberty for the sake of civil attainments, or their civil attainments for the sake of conscience. Mr. Pitt insisted, that the test must have been understood as a stipulation at the time of the union, since Scotland had acquiesced in it from that period to the present, without complaint. The hardship of the test (he said) was but imaginary. It was not a dereliction of the principles of the church of Scotland, but merely a pledge of amity with the church of England. This willingness to communicate with a sister church, he understood to be the general sentiment of the members of the church of Scotland. But in Scotland there were, as in England, sectaries of various denominations, whose sentiments were less liberal. Against such sectaries, it was

* Viz. Those catholics who denied the doctrine, that princes excommunicated by the pope might be deposed and murdered by their subjects; that no faith was to be kept with heretics; and that the power of ecclesiastical absolution dissolved moral obligations.

just, as well as expedient, that the test should operate; otherwise the church of England would suffer an encroachment from them, to which, from sectaries of England, she was not exposed, as the legislature had repeatedly declared its intention to guard her. For, as there was no test in Scotland, an exemption in favour of that country would let in upon the church of England dissenters and sectaries of every denomination, and thus break down the fence which the wisdom and justice of parliament had so often and so lately confirmed. Sir Gilbert Elliot's motion was negatived.

For three years past, we have seen the friends of human nature appealing in vain for the abolition of its foulest disgrace to a British legislature, or obtaining only partial modifications of an enormous evil. The subject of the slave-trade was resumed during this session, and a body of evidence laid before parliament, which had been carefully and deeply scrutinized by a select committee of the house of commons. On the faith of these documents, respecting the guilty and bloody barbarity of the trade, Mr. Wilberforce moved for leave to bring in a bill to prevent the farther importation of slaves into our West-India colonies. To arrest the supply of the islands by this inhuman traffic, Mr. Wilberforce considered as the surest means of meliorating the condition of those who were already in a state of slavery in the colonies; since their owners, when debarred from a market, would be obliged, for their own interests, to keep up their stock by milder usage. The pleas of justice, of mercy, and of policy, which have been urged on this subject by the abolitionists, although numerous in detail, and indisputable in proof, have been so frequently repeated, from the popular interest of the question, that, without weakening their force, they may be briefly stated. The means

CHAP.
XXIV.

1791.

by which slaves are obtained on the coast of Africa are, by force or fraud; by the purchase of those which are born slaves, from their African possessors; by the sale of criminals or prisoners of war; or by violent captures, which have none of these pretences. That the last and most nefarious of those methods is very generally used in obtaining these human cargoes, is substantiated beyond all contradiction. That the other methods of procuring them, which the traders pretend to be founded in justice, are in reality atrocious; is not merely to be suspected, but notorious. We purchase slaves in war; and war is made to supply the purchasers. We purchase criminals, it is said; and men convicted of witchcraft and sorcery are sent from those African tribunals to propitiate their crimes under the lash of the West Indies. Our security, too, that only fair and honourable means are used in filling up those cargoes of our fellow-creatures, whence does it arise, and to whom is it intrusted? Who is it that presides over the African tribunal, to assure us that the wretched culprit is condemned for a crime before he is devoted to the last extremities of a punishment? Who is it that becomes security for the Guinea captain and his black agent, that all the victims thrust into his hold are either taken in war, or taken by means that will shew the shadow of defence? All is entrusted to the high justice and tender mercy of men who deal professionally in human blood; to the black trader, who is degraded beneath the barbarism of Africa by his connection with the commerce of Europe; to the Guinea captains, who have been known to torture infants in boiling water, and apply burning coals to their prisoners when they refused to eat.

All that can be said in palliation of the sin is, that some of their cargoes are obtained by what they denominate fair purchase. But of the rest

that remain what shall be said? And what of those, who fall avowedly into our hands, by rapine, as wide as it is atrocious? 'The slave-trade' (says Archdeacon Paley) 'destroys more in one year than the inquisition did in an hundred, or perhaps even since its foundation.' 'But the traffic' (says its defenders) 'employs a capital, which cannot be instantly withdrawn.' Then let it be gradually withdrawn; and if a compromise must be made between gain and iniquity, let the protracted existence of the trade be no longer than is necessary to remove that capital. 'But it is a nursery' (say they) 'for our seamen!' It is known' (the abolitionists reply) 'to be the grave of our seamen.' 'Other nations (they tell us) would take it up.' Then the crime would not be ours. In fine, there is no apology offered for the slave-trade, which, if admitted, would not triumphantly exculpate every criminal that ever pleaded for his life at the Old Bailey. The bill was thrown out, though the minister gave it his strenuous support.

CHAP.
XXIV.

1791.

A bill was, however, passed during the session, from which (though a slight atonement to the cause of humanity for the rejection of Mr. Wilberforce's bill), yet hopes were formed that, by its ultimate effect, it might extirpate the practice, along with the necessity of importing slaves from Africa, for supplying the markets of Europe with the produce of the west. This was to establish a colony at Sierra Leone, on the coast of Africa, in the eighth degree of north latitude, where the soil was described, by those who best knew it, to be capable of producing, in excellence and almost spontaneously, the various articles of cotton, coffee, sugar, &c. A tract of land was allotted, to be cultivated by freemen, and an honourable experiment was to be made, whether Africa might not be rendered, by

civilization, a market for our manufactures, instead of a nursery of slaves.

Previous to the production of his financial plan, Mr. Pitt proposed to appoint a committee to consider and report the amount of the public income and expenditure for the last five years, and that the same committee should be directed to inquire what the public expenditure might be expected to be in future, and what alteration had taken place in the amount of the national debt since the 5th of January 1786. The result of this comparison of income and expenditure was as follows.—

Annual Income	£16,030,285
Expenditure, including a million for liquidating the national debt	15,969,178

Balance in favour of the country £61,107

Mr. Sheridan, as usual, took the lead in combating the financial conclusions of the minister. He remarked, that the report of the present committee, shewed the fallacy of the estimate of future expence, which had been made by the former committee in 1786. That estimate amounted to the annual sum of £14,478,181, whereas the actual amount now stated by the present committee, is £15,969,178; which, after the deduction of the annual £1,000,000 for discharging the national debt, exceeded the former calculation of future expenditure, by more than £900,000. On the 3^d of June, Mr. Sheridan again urged his objections to the minister's statement of finances, in a series of more than forty resolutions, tending to establish, in the first place, a mistake in the report of 1786; in the second place, to shew, from an average of the public income and expenditure for three years past, that, instead of being a surplus, there was a

deficiency in the public funds; to exhibit, in the third place, the sums voted for 1791, and to prove from these, that the expence of our present establishment far exceeded the calculations stated in the report of the committee. The fourth set of his resolutions were to establish, that, allowing the above surplus to have existed, still, from the report of the same committee, extraordinary and unforeseen expences might be expected to arise in subsequent, as had invariably been the case in past years. The majority of Mr. Sheridan's resolutions were rejected, and the few which passed, were so modified and amended, as to change their original sense.

The supplies of the year were nearly the same as in the usual peace establishment, and no fresh taxes were imposed. Mr. Dundas produced his annual statement of Indian finance, which he said, had been in a state of prosperity, ever since Mr. Pitt's plan of territorial government, and the commencement of his own executive direction; and that the British revenues in the east, amounted to £7,000,000, after defraying all the expences of government, leaving a surplus of £1,500,000, either for investments or contingent services. Parliament was prorogued, on the 10th of June, to the 31st of January 1792.

As the years of peace are ever favourable to speculation, the activity of the English mind appears, during the present period, to have been inflamed, to an uncommon degree, with the controversy of theoretical politics. The French revolution had sprung from principles, which the English whigs recognized as those of their own constitution; it had not yet reached, though it was verging to the climax which shewed the danger of indiscriminately applying such principles to political practice. The conclusion of this eventful year, was,

CHAP.
XXIV.
1791.

indeed, the crisis between hope and fear in the hearts of those who wished well to the liberties of France, but who dreaded the excesses, which so momentous a change might produce. The worst disgraces of the revolution had not arrived, and, until their arrival, the friends of liberty were unwilling to forebode them. To this benevolent principle, the more enlightened whigs ascribe their predilection for the French revolution, at a period, when its promised blessings seemed more than to counterbalance the evils it had occasioned. If their hopes have been falsified, let not the principles, on which our own revolution was founded, be insulted for the event. The name of liberty, and not her cause, has been profaned. The attempt of a great people to emancipate themselves, has, indeed, failed, and innumerable crimes have discredited the attempt. In the awful moral of the event, we read the dangers of revolutions. Let not Englishmen, however, forget a warning which it affords, no less important; that the tyranny, which debases a people, must ultimately end in revolution, and in proportion as the tyranny has been, so will be the horror of the change.

Without refining on distinction, it may be fair to separate the class of men to whom we have now alluded, from other abettors of the French revolution in England, whose influence was unhappily felt in the ferment of the present times. We have seen the principles declared by Mr. Fox, in his controversy with Mr. Burke, in parliament, when this subject was introduced: a declaration which may defy the most rigid interpretation to set it at variance with the principles of English liberty, or the loyalty of a British subject. Such a declaration of faith upon the French revolution, might include an erroneous idea of the French constitution, but implied neither heresy nor error, with respect to

our own. Other answers to the writings of Mr. Burke, were dictated by the same constitutional grounds which Mr. Fox had assumed, among which the work of Mackintosh will be long remembered. But the controversy was not confined to men who could have enlightened the understandings of Englishmen, while they warmed their hearts with the love of constitutional liberty. The answer of Paine brought the question to republican principles, inapplicable to the country and constitution; and the controversy, which philosophers should have managed, was brought before the mob. This literary appeal to popular passions, debased the controversy in England, as the practical appeal to the mob degraded it in France. Along with the writings of Paine, it might be lawful to class many contemporary productions of the same incendiary stamp; but in speaking of contemporaries, the enumeration of names, for the mere purpose of censure, ought to be omitted.

Among the speculative friends of reform, the English dissenters were, in general, distinguished for the boldness of their sentiments in religious, as well as political disputes. Exulting in their high hope, that an era of universal toleration was at hand, and that the death-blow, which superstition had received in France, would speedily level ecclesiastical monopolies over the rest of Europe; they spoke and wrote a language of independence, bordering on temerity, and strongly disrespectful to the established church. All the contempt which they had received from the church dignitaries, was repaid with interest, in their predictions of an approaching triumph. At the head of these dissenting polemics, stood the celebrated Priestley.⁷ An event,

⁷ In speaking of distinguished dissenters, it is no irreverence to rate his respectability as an useful friend to truth, very far below the memory of Dr. Priestley to other literary characters, among

CHAP
XX V
1791.

which occurred in the city where this gentleman lived, and where the followers of his principles were much distinguished in the cause of independence, contributed to make the cause still more important in the public view, by the consequence which displayed them in the light of persecuted men. A society of gentlemen in Birmingham, having met to celebrate the anniversary of the French revolution, an inflammatory hand-bill was circulated by an unknown enemy to the meeting, and purporting to be written by an incendiary agent of the society, called on the people to insurrection. The society disavowed the atrocious paper, but it had the effect of rousing the people, though for a different purpose than the hand-bill had described. An immense mob assembled on the day of the meeting, and spreading the watch-word of church and state, carried devastation among the houses of the dissenters. For two days, Birmingham was a scene of pillage and terror. The military at last quelled the insurgents, but not until they had consumed the house and library of Dr. Priestley, along with his inestimable apparatus of natural philosophy. Dr. Priestley fled to London, from whence he wrote a letter to his brethren of the dissenting faith, most uncharitably ascribing the disturbance to a conspiracy of the English clergy against him. However unjust this allegation was, the event may be recorded as one of the unfortunate circumstances which aggravated, for the present, the feelings of public discord, and contributed to future exasperation.

Parliament assembled again on the 31st of January 1792, and the king's speech contained little more than what related to foreign transactions.

the dissenting body. While the polemical writings of Priestley have passed for the most part, the mind was dom of such men as Dr. Aiken, has

conciliated the respect of even the writer's opponents, in religious and political speculation.

The marriage of his royal highness the duke of York, with the daughter of the king of Prussia; the treaty of peace, concluded through the medium of Great Britain and its allies, between the emperor and the Turks; and the preliminaries settled between the latter and the empress of Russia; the continuation of the war which had lately broken out in India; the assurances of friendship and good-will on the part of the European powers, and the prospect thence arising of a stability of domestic prospects, and of a diminution of the public expence (particularly a reduction in the army and navy), were the principal subjects of notice or congratulation.

CHAP.
XXIV.
1791.

The animadversions of opposition fell most severely on the Russian armament; and Mr. Fox congratulated the minority on the success of their opposition to a war, against which the interests and voice of the nation had so decidedly spoken.

If the temper of the present times favoured extreme latitude of opinion, there was, however, an opposite re-action to be dreaded from the prosecutions which that licentiousness drew upon the literary speculations of the country. The crown lawyers becoming jealous of that powerful engine of good and evil, were disposed to subject the press to every possible controul. A maxim laid down by Lord Mansfield, that 'the greater the truth, the greater was the libel,' was universally established in courts of justice; and juries were not allowed to decide in cases of libels on the whole question at issue, but confined to the single point of certain words being spoken, printed, or published, by the accused. From a doctrine so indefinite, a great latitude of interpretation was left to the judges, who, from their views and situations, most naturally lean to the side of prerogative. The result of prosecutions thus depended more upon the

CHAP.
XXIV

1792.

judge than the jury, and the doctrine of libels became an engine of terror in the hands of government. Mr. Fox had introduced, during the last session, a bill upon this subject, which the lords had rejected; but which triumphed during the present session, to the general satisfaction of the nation. The decision of the question, turned not a little on Mr. Fox's critical observation on the word meaning, which is used in all indictments for libels. The term to mean, he observed, has two distinct significations; one in which it may imply a proposition, according to strict grammatical and logical construction; another, in which it may be taken to express the intention of the writer and speaker. In the former sense, it had been extensively taken by judges for many years past, but in the latter, it ought to be taken by a candid and impartial English jury, who were not to determine the logical construction, but the intention of the words expressed in the indictment. When the question came before the peers, Lord Camden strenuously supported the right of juries alone to decide on questions of libels. He recapitulated a series of cases from the time of the celebrated Bracton, who lived 500 years ago, to prove, that in all the charges of juries, they were to judge of the intention and tendency of the alleged libel. Judge Jeffreys himself, in all his devotion to an arbitrary court, had been of this opinion; to whom, said Lord Camden, 'should the judging of libels be confided, or to speak more properly, who were to guard the liberty of the press, the judges, or the people of England? the juries were evidently the people of England.' Lord Lansdowne seconded these opinions, in an able speech, which he concluded, by declaring, 'that twelve reasonable and conscientious men were, in his opinion, as competent to pronounce judgment,

on a matter of law and fact, as the judges themselves. But the profession of the law,' he observed, 'filled men with presumption and arrogance, and it was the tendency of their profession, to wish for oracular dominion. Could that ennobled member,' he added, 'who reigned over the King's Bench, overthrow the bill in question, he would become lord paramount of England.' The bill passed through both houses, by a considerable majority.

A society had been for some time instituted, for the object of parliamentary reform, and securing the freedom and greater frequency of elections. It comprehended, like other popular institutions, men of various degrees of respectability, and inspired by different motives in the cause of innovation; but many of its members were distinguished for their literary and professional talents, and for their station and circumstances in society. They denominated themselves, *the Friends of the People*. Their avowed objects were strictly constitutional, and their society included the greater number of the opposition in the lower house. Mr. Fox, however, did not so far approve of their objects, as to attach himself to their number. To sound the disposition of parliament, Mr. Grey declared his intention of conveying the petition of the reforming society to parliament, and introducing a motion for reform, early in the next session. Mr. Pitt expressed himself a friend to the cause of reform, but declared his conviction, that the circumstances of the times rendered innovation, of every description, unseasonable and dangerous.

The spirit of reform was not, however, checked by parliamentary discouragements, but diffused itself, in new channels, through a multitude of affiliated associations, which were called the *Corresponding societies*.

CHAP.
XXIV

1792.

As the events, however, in a neighbouring kingdom, grew darker, the cause of British reform was abandoned by its more respectable patrons, and fell into the lowest hands. With the exception of Horne Tooke, the London Corresponding society had not one member, whose talents or influence could reflect importance on any meeting. But before the cause had fallen thus low, a society of creditable individuals in Scotland, had united their efforts for a more defined, as well as reasonable purpose. Their object was to ameliorate the decayed representation of the burghs of Scotland. The subject was brought before parliament by Mr. Sheridan. The number of those burghs was sixty-six, and fifty of them had petitioned parliament for redress. They complained of infringements on their rights, and their property, through the unlawful authority of magistrates, who were self-elected; and against whose usurpation of power no law had provided a remedy. The main grievance was the self-election of the magistrates, of which Mr. Sheridan moved for the abolition. It had been objected, he observed, 'that abuses of the same sort existed in England; but to this he answered, that the existence of one abuse, could not justify another. It had been also stated, that there were courts in Scotland to whom an appeal could be made against the hardships of the case. On this subject he had consulted those who were masters of the subject, and found that there were none.' The lord advocate of Scotland denied the charges of injustice and dilapidation, of which the self-elected magistrates were accused; he allowed the deficiency of a tribunal to judge of their accounts, and offered to join with Mr. Sheridan, in proposing the establishment of such a tribunal, provided the system of the Scottish burghs should be allowed to remain untouched; but protested

against the abolition of self-election in the magistracy, because their taxes and exactions were fairly amenable to the high court of justice in Scotland. On dividing, for referring the petitions to a committee, the question was negatived.

The other proceedings of the session, were neither numerous, nor, in general, important. The subject of the slave-trade was again agitated, and, by a decision of the commons, it was ordained, that it should cease from the commencement of the year 1796 ; but, on reference to the peers, the consideration even of its gradual abolition, did not pass, and the question was postponed to the succeeding year.

The Scottish episcopalians petitioned parliament, during this session, for exemption from certain penal restraints, to which the suspicion of their attachment to the house of Stewart had, in former periods, subjected them ; and a bill of indulgence was passed in their favour. The unitarians, pleading for similar toleration, were less successful ; and a motion, introduced in their favour by Mr. Fox, met the usual fate of minority proposals.

An interference in the police of the metropolis, deserves to be noticed, as one of the prominent acts of the session. The evils attending excessive and condensed population, in a state of society where the extremes of want and luxury grow up together, had rendered the vices of London unable to be controuled by the institutions which were adopted in simpler times. The ancient, and once venerable, office of justice of the peace, was sufficient in those days, to keep in check the ordinary routine of transgressions. But the increase of crimes made that office at last so extremely burdensome, that no person would undertake it, unless with a view to emoluments ;

(HAP.
XXIV.

1791.

and it fell into those base hands, whose conduct gave but too much sanction to the complaints against the prevalence of a trading justice. The plan of a bill, which was introduced for the remedy of this excessive evil, was to open five different offices in the metropolis for the prompt administration of justice in the different quarters, to give the justices each a salary of £300 a-year, and to prevent them from taking the fees of their office individually. Their fees were to be applied to the payment of their salaries and official expenses. A power was also vested in the constables of each district, to apprehend such persons as would not give a satisfactory account of their employment; and the justices were authorized to commit them as vagrants.

The prospect of a general peace, which we have seen announced by his majesty at the opening of the present session was supposed to justify the military reductions and other measures of relief to the public credit, which were submitted to the session, before its close. As the expensive armaments in the late disturbances with Spain and Russia, had given birth to much discontent during the preceding year, the ministry were disposed to dwell, with apparent confidence, on the present pacific aspect of affairs. These armaments had cost the nation no less than £2,000,000 of money; and, though the Spaniards had ceded their claims to the exclusive possession of *Nephtka* sound, yet *Oczakow* was left in possession of Russia, after all the menaces of the British government. To divert the public mind from these unpleasing retrospects, the minister had taken an early occasion to display the prosperous state of the revenue, and the grounds on which he hoped to lighten, and finally to remove, the burden of the national debt.

He announced that the permanent taxes from the year 1791, to the commencement of 1792, had produced £16,730,000, exceeding the average of the last four years, by £500,000; deducting from which, the total of the expenditure, amounting, by the reductions proposed, to £15,811,000, the permanent income would exceed the permanent expense, including the £1,000,000 annually appropriated to the extinction of the national debt, by no less than £400,000. The supplies wanted for the present year, amounted to £5,654,000, for which the ways and means provided a sum exceeding that of the former year, by £37,000. By the methods projected for the redemption of the national debt, £25,000,000 would be paid off in the space of fifteen years, towards which the interests of the sums annually redeemed, would be carried to the sinking fund, till the annual sum, to be applied to the reduction of that debt, should amount to £4,000,000.

Such a statement of the finances, accompanied with the assurances of a continued peace, would have been satisfactory to the nation, if the continuance of peace could have seemed indubitable. But while it was announced, the political atmosphere foreboded a storm. In the agitations of France, in the armaments of the expatriated princes, who were rousing nations to become parties in their cause, the approach of those convulsions were already perceived, which have since desolated Europe. It was urged, for these reasons, that the minister was absolutely insincere in the expectations he declared; or, at least, that they were much less sanguine in his heart, than in his words. He spoke of reducing armies, and dismantling fleets, at the very moment, when, perhaps, the armed and impartial mediation of Britain between the powers of the continent and France,

CHAP.

XXIV.

1791.

was the only means to have averted war. Such a mediation, in concert with the wise moderation and defensive system of Leopold, and the delay of British interference, till that interference could not come in the shape of mediation, consummated the evils to be dreaded from the prevalence of the war-like faction in France. It may seem an indecisive and hesitating opinion to divide the causes, and even the culpability of the war among so many agents; but the evidence of history, will support this opinion. To impute the war to a single cause, or a single party, will not account for its origin; and we should remember, that to deny the existence of a contributing cause, because it is inadequate, singly to account for an effect, is, in the highest degree, unphilosophical. The interference of Britain did not come, till France had been victorious in the Netherlands, and then it was necessary to demand restitution of conquests. Let us judge, from our national pride, how difficult it is to purchase peace by such a sacrifice. Before the conquest of the Netherlands, our mediation would have had no such obstacle to encounter.

The views of the British government appear, however, to have been wholly pacific, so late as the midsummer of this year, when his majesty declared, in concluding the session, that he had every reason to expect the uninterrupted blessings of tranquillity.

The marked praise bestowed in the speech from the throne, on the plan which had been pursued for reducing the national debt, was supposed by some, to have been an expression of triumph, on the part of the minister, over the chancellor Thurlow, who had always treated that favourite measure, as well as others of the minister, with severe animadversion. Frequent bickerings had already taken place between Mr. Pitt and the Chancellor.

After the prorogation of parliament, as there was no immediate necessity for his services in the house of peers, the great seal was committed to the custody of three commissioners;^a the chancellor, from that period, sided uniformly with opposition. From the propitious circumstances of the times, and the large capitals of our merchants, the commerce of Britain had, for several years, exceeded the prosperity of any former period. In one week, in the month of May, the actual increase of the revenue exceeded that of the corresponding week, in the preceding year, by the sum of £118,000. It would be absurd to ascribe this extraordinary influx of public wealth, to the wisdom of the minister of that time; but it cannot be denied, that he stood forth as the friend and patron of every laudable plan for the extension of commerce. By late events we have seen, that measures had been adopted for establishing a trade in furs, and eventually in other articles, on the North west coast of America. The seeds of future commerce had been sown in the islands of the South seas, and new channels were to be opened for the importation of British manufactures into India. If a free commerce could be settled with China and Japan, it was expected that the zone of British commerce would encircle and invest the globe.

For the object of extending our trade with China, which, though estimated at several millions, was still insignificant, in comparison of the empire from which it was drawn, the memorable embassy of Lord Macartney was undertaken, of which the particulars and result have been too minutely related, to require repetition. It is sufficient to say, that however costly and magnificent were the means employed to give effect to this mission, the end did

^a Sir James Tyre, Sir William Ashhurst, and Sir John Wilson

CHAP.
XXIV.

1791.

not correspond with the flattering appearances which seem'd, at first, to promise its accomplishment.

The splendour of the embassy, which was meant to convey a strong impression of the dignity and power of his Britannic majesty, appeared to excite the jealousy, rather than the admiration of the Chinese; and the favours of trade and establishment, which had been frequently granted by that people to the humble missionaries of the Jesuits, were not to be won by all the dazzling pomp of a British legation. The display of our military art and discipline, which was made with injudicious ostentation, did not diminish the unfortunate effect of certain rumours, which had reach'd the court of Peking, that, in the late wars of the Chinese monarch in Thibet, numbers of English had been seen in the hostile ranks. The probability is, that these military adventurers in the Thibetian service, were not our countrymen; but the name of Englishmen being best known in the east for military achievements, every European in the military life, was most readily supposed to be English. Influenced by these jealousies, the Chinese received our ambassador with more civility than confidence, and after the delivery of his presents in the capital, he was advised, for the sake of his health, to remove before the setting in of the east winds, or, in other words, directed to leave the kingdom.

During the short interval of peace in Europe, our eastern empire in India again became the scene of hostilities with the son and successor of our late inveterate enemy, Hyder Ali, who encountered the British power with all the zeal and ability of his father. Tippoo Saib had been reduced in strength at the peace of Mangalore; but the same peace which was dictated by his weakness, gave him leisure to recruit his forces, and to concert, in silence, and

to the utmost pitch of his abilities, those schemes of extermination which he cherished against the English. Lord Cornwallis, on his arrival in India, in 1786, found the settlements and affairs of the company flourishing in all the apparent security of peace, trade, and extensive alliance. Such was the state of India, when Tippoo, in the summer of 1788, marched his army down the Ghauts, towards the Malabar coast, evidently with hostile designs against the rajah of Travancore. He first endeavoured to detach him from the alliance of the English; but finding this effort fruitless, he encouraged the rajah of Cochin, one of his tributaries, to lay claim, upon some antiquated pretence, to part of the ground on which the lines are built to defend Travancore on the north, the only quarter on which it is accessible to an invading army. The interposition of the government of Bengal overawed the sultan for a while. He withdrew his troops, and returned to Seringapatam. The following summer, however, afforded stronger temptation to begin hostilities. The rajah of Travancore had bought from the Dutch two forts, Cranganore and Jacottah, which lay between Cochin and Mysore. Tippoo was, or affected to be, highly enraged at the bargain, asserting that, as feudal sovereign of that part of the Malabar coast, no transfer of the property could be made without his permission. In the spring of 1789, his attack upon the lines of Travancore necessarily involved the British government in the defence of their ally. During the first of our campaigns, which took place in the following year, Tippoo, with great address, avoided coming to a general engagement, although General Meadows, with 15,000 men, pressed him hard from the side of the Carnatic, and Major-general Abercromby, proceeding from the Bombay side, took several places

CHAP.
XX V

1790.

1791.

1792.

of strength, and defeated several bodies of the enemy. Our allies, the Mahrattas, and the nizam of the Decan, performed no essential services during the same campaign. The next campaign commenced with the memorable siege and capture of Bangalore. Cornwallis, at the head of the main army, aimed at a plan of hostilities worthy of British energy and his own reputation; it was to strike at the sultan's capital, and bring him either to peace or destruction. This, however, he did not accomplish so soon as he at first had reason to expect. It was not till the month of May that he reached the capital of the Mysore dominions, after defeating Tippoo in a pitched and decisive battle; the floods of the Cavery prevented him from investing the city; and the siege of Seringapatam was deferred till another campaign. On the 7th of February 1792, the British army again arrived before it, after a great many sieges and military movements, of the different bodies of troops, native and European, of which it was composed. After the junction of Abercromby's forces, the trenches were opened, and batteries opened within 800 yards of the fort. Seringapatam is of a triangular form, and is invested on two sides by the Cavery. It was on the north of that fort, across the river, that Cornwallis determined to make the attack. Abercromby falling on the opposite, which was the weakest side, drove in the troops of the city, and pushed on the siege with unremitting vigour. On the 24th, the sultan's affairs appearing desperate, fearing sedition within the fort, and farther opposition from without, he consented to the terms of peace which were dictated by his besiegers. These were, that he should cede one half of his dominions to the allied powers; 2^d, that he should pay three crores and thirty lacks of rupces (about £4,125,000 sterling); 3^d

that he should unequivocally restore all the prisoners which had been taken by the Mysoreans, from the time of Hyder Ally; and, 4th, that two of his three eldest sons should be delivered up as hostages for the due performance of the treaty. Some difficulties arising, before these terms although generally agreed to by the sultan, could be exactly defined and ascertained, it was observed that Tippoo availed himself of the delay, and had begun to repair the breaches in his fortifications. Lord Cornwallis immediately issued orders for the recommencement of the siege, and for the two princes, who had already come in as hostages, to be sent off to the Carnatic. Tippoo was daunted, by the consciousness, that if hostilities should again commence, they would probably terminate in his utter destruction. He submitted to every demand of the conquerors; and on the 19th of March the definitive treaty, as dictated by Lord Cornwallis, was delivered to the ambassadors of the three allied powers, with the greatest solemnity.

CHAP. XXV.

Situation of affairs in France.... Parties in the national assembly.... Declaration of war with the king of Hungary and Bohemia.... Subjection of the king to republican ministers.... Insurrection of the 20th of June.... Appearance of La Fayette in Paris.... His vain efforts to rouse the Parisians in behalf of the king.... Another insurrection, prepared by the jacobins.... Events of the 10th of August.... March of the Prussians into France.... Progressive influence of the jacobins.... Events from the 2^d to the 6th of September in Paris.... Demouriez appointed to be generalissimo of the French armies.... Seizes on the pass of the Argonne.... Meets the duke of Brunswick.... Miserable situation and retreat of the Prussians.... Convention of Demouriez with Frederick William.

CHAP.
XXV.

1791.

FROM the era of the present year, the interests of all Europe assumed so unfortunate a connection with the progress of the French revolution, that it is impossible to detach the consideration of that event from the history of our own kingdom.

On the 1st of October 1791, the legislative assembly of France held its first sitting. The constituent assembly had created, with much pomp and fatigue, a constitution, of which it began to experience the errors, when it was too late to redeem them. It had deprived the throne of its splendour, of its dignity, of all that acts on the imagination of a people, who, for their own happiness, are to live under royalty, and, for their own interests, to revere it. They called their king to that throne from a state of captivity. All the parts of public authority were disunited and inde-

pendent; the executive power had been deprived of its administrative authority, which was scattered at large through a crowd of districts and departments, and divided among 1000 municipalities. The constituent assembly had imposed no limits to the revolutionary zeal of their successors, but the constitution itself; that is to say, some insignificant pages of a written constitution, consecrated by the oaths of a frivolous and irreligious people. It left to the king no power but that of a veto, limited in its institution and baneful in its exercise. The monarch could not attract ambitious men to his influence, by any power, of nominating to the greater offices of state; he could only purchase a few venal supporters by a civil list, which of itself soon became a source of defamation against the most disinterested defenders of the constitutional throne. Such was the work of an assembly, celebrated for the individual genius, and even for the virtues, of a great number of its members.

• The idea of revising the constitution, was too late, conceived by a party of its most enlightened statesmen, men who wished to arrest the headlong course of the revolution. This proposal was combated by two distinct parties, remote in their views, but equally destructive to the cause of liberty. The aristocrats, an oppressed and vindictive party, pressed for a dissolution of the assembly, and the non-re-election of its members; because they wished for the abasement of the patriots, whom they regarded as the sole authors of their calamities, and because they foresaw, in that dissolution, an increase of the evils of anarchy. To men like them, who meditated the invasion of France, no prospect could be more pleasing than that of her intestine divisions. Another, and an opposite party, were equally clamorous for dissolution; a party of

CHAT.
XXV.

1791.

CHAP.
XXV.

1791.

this period so small and insignificant, that it hardly merited a name. The chief speaker was Rober-spierré. This incendiary, it may be well conceiv-ed, was not behind the aristocrats in wishing for the means of anarchy; and by uniting the influ-ence of his party with the other enemies of the constitution, he fatally prevailed. The jealousies of popular opinion were on the side of the disso-lutionists; and, yielding to these, the assembly abandoned to every danger, a king and a constitu-tion, whom they might have still supported by a vigorous and virtuous defence.

The acceptance of the constitution had been proposed to the king while a prisoner; but some days before the solemnity of the acceptance, the gates of his palace had been thrown open, that he might enjoy at least the semblance of a free choice. No means were omitted to give the appearance of sincerity to this reconciliation of the people and the king. The king displayed, at the ceremony, all the unaffected sensibility of his heart. The president of the assembly, Thouret, presented the broken sceptre of the new constitution. The sig-nal for public rejoicing was given; but ominous sentiments prevailed in every heart. The fêtes were at once sumptuous and mournful; the people seemed sad and distrustful; the king seemed to interrogate their looks with an air of melancholy. When the queen appeared, it was with difficulty that the murmurs of the multitude could be stifled. The unfortunate family soon gave over shewing themselves, to the pity, rather than to the love of the Parisians; and the court became a dark and silent asylum of suspicions, and of timid intrigues, which were mistaken for conspiracies. After these fêtes, a revolutionary amnesty was proclaimed, and the restriction of pas-sports abolished. To men blinded by hatred of the revolution, such a liberty

seemed deliverance from a prison. The brothers of the king availed themselves of the decree, and drew along with them all the nobility of France, who were impelled either by fidelity, or false enthusiasm, or their ruined circumstances, to attach themselves to the counter-revolutionary standard. The *émigrés* resorted to Coblenz, and were followed by crowds of adventurers of every description. The designs of these men were not in the least disguised at their departure. Their threats of invasion were heard in every quarter; the royalists, who remained in France, repeated and reported them with too much exultation. The queen herself was observed to be imprudent in her declarations of this nature; while the king seemed to regard the event with grief, but, by his natural irresolution, was prevented from taking active measures to counteract the savage manifestoes of his brothers. After all this mighty emigration, there still remained in France a body of counter-revolutionists more numerous than even in the first days of the revolution. Some of the more faithful of these remained near the king, many of them distinguished by their services in happier times of the monarchy. The generality preceded or followed Louis to the scaffold.

Beside the aristocrats, three other distinct parties appeared in the legislative assembly. The epoch of choosing the legislative assembly was that of the unfortunate flight of the king to Varennes. This circumstance naturally had inflamed the public opinion, and the elections were dictated by the spirit of the times. Of the new deputies, therefore, some were assembled to destroy, and others to preserve, the constitution. The constitutionists were described as, on the whole, the most numerous party; but their power was too often weakened by fear, by distrust, and by the very faults of the constitution. They de-

CHAP.

XCV.

1791.

fended a set of ministers, who were divided among themselves; they defended a king, who had not energy to aid them; a court, who secretly disliked them, and often treated them with contempt; they defended a constitution, the defects of which they daily experienced; but still they made an honourable stand for those parts of the declaration of rights which they could reasonably defend against those who gave them a fanatical and delirious interpretation.

Their adversaries, the republican party, whose sentiments had spread rapidly since the flight to Varennes, were headed by Condorcet and Brissot; the former a distinguished philosopher, whose life had been devoted to science, and distinguished by private virtues; the latter an ambitious and voluminous writer, but scarce above mediocrity in reputation. The republican theorists were supported by the party of the Gironde, among whom were three distinguished deputies, whose eloquence was leagued with the writings of Condorcet and the intrigues of Brissot, to erect the baseless fabric of democracy. Gensonné, the least illustrious of the three, possessed a talent for reflection, and a great resource for intrigue; he had a cold, didactic, and imposing manner, which gave an air of wisdom to his hardest propositions. Gaudet had an eloquence which appealed to the passions; but which was, at the same time, sarcastic and strong. Vergneaux was the pride of this party; he had all the qualities of the orator, though none at all of the statesman; though the chief of a popular party, he did not prostitute the dignity of his mission for the favour of that party: on the contrary, he drew along with him the minds of the vulgar, by a charm which they have seldom sensibility to feel. Under these men, the whole Girondist faction, almost all distinguished for ability and zeal,

unhappily marshalled themselves against the court, in supporting changes, which, by and by, they were unable to controul.

CHAP.
XXV.

1791.

For a while they affected an influence in the jacobin club, but in this they were more criminally ambitious than successful. The scene was better fitted for Robespierre's domination, and he obtained it. Whatever were the talents of this demagogue, hypocrisy was his first forte, and the earliest source of his influence. It was such, that his very enemies, for a while, regarded him as a *virtuous man*. Nature seemed to have disgraced him even for the office of a tribune. Without grace or amenity, with an uncouth figure, and a drawling declamation, he wished to play the enthusiast, but fatigued, rather than alarmed, by his atrocious harangues. His talents, however, were somewhat expanded by his power, and his mind had a force beyond nature, in its deep resources of hatred and dissimulation. While he openly attacked the perfidy of the court, he spread suspicions against the Girondists. This jealousy of his rival republicans retarded the revolution for a while, but only to make it finally more atrocious.

Leagued with him was Danton, a man endowed with every talent for the business of destruction. Furious, and yet artful; he shewed himself capable of deceiving all his enemies, except those whom he thought his devoted friends. Though not at all times insensible to pity, his cruelty was deep-laid. He had cherished the plan of his career, even when the revolution was surrounded by the illusions of philanthropy. In the midst of the jacobins, he now headed a band of devoted followers, known by the appellation of the Cordeliers, where his terrible countenance, and the lion-like tone of his voice, gave an effect to his savage

CHAP.
XXV

1791.

and gigantic eloquence, that was altogether frightful; yet this stern perturbator was thoroughly venal, and in the pay of different factions. He cheated them all, it is true, except Robespierre, who kept him in a strange subordination. To these elements of discord the followers of Orleans have been improperly added, as a separate faction. Orleans had hitherto undoubtedly bought, by the power of money, a certain malignant influence in the revolution, beyond the scale of his talents to maintain. At the present period, it rather appears that his cowardice and guilt had sunk to their proper level. He had joined the revolutionists; but his manœuvres were obscure, and it is not known that his liberalities were considerable; even in the guilty band he served, and was treated as a common soldier.

Since the 14th of July, the greatest authority in the capital had rested with the mayor of Paris and the commandant of the national guard. Bailli had filled the former situation with credit to himself; but still greater had been the merit of La Fayette, who organized, for useful purposes, the dangerous mass of the national guard; or rather had selected from its numbers, to preserve the public peace, some companies of patriots, attached to the cause of liberty by the natural passion of their age, and attached to the cause of order by their fortune or their birth. La Fayette and Bailli went out of those important functions. The national guard lost their leader, and, along with him, their zeal and their strength seemed to be lost also; the command of them was entrusted to six chefs de battalion, who were to exercise it by rotation. The mayoralty passed to Petion, whose character has been given, by impartial historians of the revolution, as that of an honest man; but, in times like these

we now describe, when the value of every private virtue in public character fades into insignificance, without the great virtue of courage to prevent bloodshed, the character of Petion is not fitted to shine. He was an adversary of the throne, and attached to the Girondists.

The picture of the rest of France corresponded, at this period, with that of the capital. In the south, the animosities which the revolution had kindled, assumed a dark and implacable character. Marseilles was full of enthusiasm; but it was the frenzy of republicanism. Lyons had shewn less attachment to the revolution; but its resistance was secret, or silent; and, upon the whole, its industrious inhabitants seemed willing to repose under the new constitution. Arles was a prey to the most frightful disorders; Avignon was the scene of horrors, which are too well known. In the north and the east, the revolutionary spirit was still concentrated in the clubs, and had not received the signal for explosion; but the great depreciation of paper-money, and the discontents of the priests, strongly agitated the peace and comfort of the people. Brittany, which had lately witnessed such excesses of popular fury against the nobles, began to change sides, and embrace the cause of the clergy. In la Vendee, the seeds of those dreadful events were already sown, which at no distant period, sprung up to such atrocity. To complete the calamitous picture of France, the continued desertion of officers produced insubordination and indiscipline among the troops of the line; public imposts could only be levied on rich proprietors; the effects of the church were sold to little advantage; the legislative assembly talked of finances, but could not repair their disorder; through the whole interior, new commotions, attended with murder and pillage, were daily break-

CHAP.
XXV.

1791.

ing out, and the fear of famine universally prevailed.

The external prospects of the country were scarcely less portentous. Since the fatal flight to Varennes, it was conjectured that the 'English cabinet' had taken a deep and active share in negotiating the continental league. Whatever was the share of England in that affair, the confederation of Austria and Prussia by the treaty of Pilnitz, was an event which France could not witness, without an awful anticipation, that two such mighty powers had not laid aside their hereditary animosities, for a league which should be merely defensive. The object of the treaty of Pilnitz has been disputed; and it may well be; for it is likely that the framers of it gave even its written articles a licence of interpretation, and looked to future circumstances, whether it should bind them to defensive only, or aggressive proceedings. The character of Leopold goes far in suggesting a pacific supposition with respect to Austria, or at least that his intentions did not exceed the declared object of the treaty, which was a powerful intercession in behalf of Louis. War was not the element in which Leopold was either fitted or disposed to shine; he had, besides, a ruinous empire to repair, which the turbulent spirit of his brother had bequeathed to him. It is certain, that the impatience of the emigrants for invading France far exceeded the zeal of the continental powers to join them. The efforts, indeed, of the three first-rate powers were for a while more lucratively employed in dividing the plunder of Poland. But, with all those alleviating circumstances, the treaty of Pilnitz was formidable to France. If Leopold wanted zeal,

* I only repeat the conjectures of the French, without vouching for the supposition, that England was so early decided by her councils in the league against France.

Frederick William of Prussia was sufficiently chivalrous in wishing for the glory of conducting such a crusade. His military genius, on the eve of enterprize, was as romantic; as in the moment of defeat, it was feeble and spiritless. But another monarch, of much superior stamp, was the hope and idol of the emigrants. This was Gustavus of Sweden. His warlike reputation, his ambition, and acknowledged talents, would in all probability have placed him at the head of the combined movements; but the hand of an assassin deprived the coalition of the only monarch who could have attached reputation to its enterprize.

Catharine II had exceeded every other crowned head in protesting abhorrence at the revolution. She bestowed immense promises, and some liberalities, on the emigrants; but she deceived them, and she deceived the whole coalition.

Beside the great powers of the coalition, some petty states had the boldness to shew hostility to France. On her frontiers, the elector of Treves, and the bishops of Spire and Strasburgh, allowed the *émigrés* to assemble in arms on their territories.

At the approach of this impending storm, France not only found herself without an ally, but beheld in every state an enemy, either secret or avowed. It was in vain that the family compact had been renewed with Spain. The humiliation of Louis could not but afflict the Bourbons; and the reception given to the emigrants announced the designs of the court of Madrid. The king of Sardinia, attached by the same ties of blood, was also known to have acceded to the league. Holland had not lost the influence of Prussia and England in her councils, since the last restoration of the stadtholder. The ancient alliance of France with the Swiss had been much cooled by the spirit of oppo-

CHAP.
XXV
1791.

sition which some of their aristocracys had shewn to the revolution. Neutrality was all that could be expected from this quarter. The court of Naples, influenced by the high and vindictive passions of its queen, was no despicable enemy, when united with such powers. The court of Rome looked again for the restoration of France to that respect for the metropolitan authority, which the late changes had so much abated. Venice was the only Italian state which, adhering to its hereditary principles of wisdom, kept neutral.

The first important acts of the legislature were directed against the emigrants, and the priests who had refused the oath to the constitution. By the former decree, the brother of the king, Stanislaus Xavier, prince of France, was warned to return within the realm, on pain of forfeiting his eventual right to the regency; and a general denunciation of treason, and the pains of death, was pronounced on those *émigrés* who should assemble without the kingdom. The decree against emigration, though apparently dictated by motives of self-defence on the part of the assembly, was yet so generally worded, as to be a pretext for much subsequent barbarity, and justified the reasonings of those moderate friends of liberty, who wished to give no pretence for sanguinary and sweeping denunciations. This decree, as well as the other against the priests, originated with the republicans. The efforts of those constitutionists, Ramond, Vaublanc, Dumas, and Le Montey, who opposed the latter decree, as the infallible signal for persecution, will do eternal honour to their names. The debate respecting the priests was uncommonly furious. It is with horror we find, in the history of that discussion, the eloquence of Vergniaud pleading the cause of persecution, and the philosophy of Condorcet enlisted on the side of intolerance. 'The refusal of an oath,' said the constitutionists, was

never held as a crime; the violation of it alone is criminal. Destroyers of inequality! beware of creating an example of proscription; one proscription, be assured, will follow another; let the mercy, the dignity, and the policy of this great nation abstain from such a sacrifice; for it will lead to a thousand immolations.' The prophetic words of the constitutionists were overwhelmed by the unworthy triumph of the Girondists, and the shouts of the execrable mob in the galleries, who already infested the assembly. These two legislative acts were submitted to the king for his sanction; he was called to sign the proscription of his own brother, and of those religious men, to whom his principles and faith attached him. He turned on all sides for advice from the ministry. Delessart, Bertrand de Moleville, Narbonne, Cahier de Gerville, Duport-Dutertre, and Tarléé, now formed his council, but a council so divided in itself, as to render even their zeal for him ineffectual. Some of the popular party were called on by the court, in this distress, to give them their advice; these were, Duport, Barnave, and Alexander Lameth. The new advisers were not wanting in fidelity, and proposed vigorous measures: they would have aided the king more effectually, and might have pointed out to him the means of disputing for popularity even with the assembly itself, if they had advised him to put a veto on those decrees. Fearing the weakness of Louis, they wished him to put himself under their guidance, and advised generally that he should support his authority by strong, but popular, plans. But Louis followed their advices with too little fidelity; and the court imprudently shewed its hatred for men, whom they could not forgive for having given the first blow to their dignity, but who now alone could have saved them.

The king put his veto on the decree respecting

CHAP.
XXV.

1791.

the emigrants, but sanctioned that part of the act which related to his own brother, hoping thus to shew his public mercy unbiassed by private affections. While the popular orators of the assembly received the resolution with extravagant rage, the department of Paris, which was then composed of enlightened men, encouraged him to put a second veto on the other decree against the clergy, which furnished new matter of invective for the republicans.

The popular party had now sufficiently experienced their power in the assembly. Their aim was the establishment of a republic; and to this object they now proceeded with accelerated steps. As war appeared the speediest means of attaining it, they longed and clamoured for that event. Who would believe, that, at this period, a single individual for a long time defeated their projects, and that that intercessor for humanity was Robespierre? He too was a republican; but he bitterly hated those rivals in his politics, whose talents eclipsed his own; and, though the war would have promoted his party, he opposed it for the sake of its authors. It was in the jacobin club that the destiny of Europe was disputed between Robespierre and Brissot. Robespierre here employed his favourite weapons, suspicion and calumny. 'We are to have war,' said he; 'and who are to conduct it? a perfidious court, in league with our enemies? We are to have war; and where are our armies, or where their resources? Our patriots will be sent out to die, that traitors may rule more securely within. These are my fears; and what is presented as a guarantee that they are groundless? the patriotism, forsooth, of Messrs. Brissot and Condorcet; those men who adored La Fayette; who were indeed, for a moment, his enemies; but were spared after his odious

success, which, perhaps, their treachery afforded him. Let patriots beware of their suggestions.' Such language displayed the deadly division already subsisting among the enemies of Louis. The court, instead of availing themselves of it, abandoned itself to intestine quarrels; while the ministers struggled with each other for ascendancy over a weak king, who had long ago ceased to think or to act for himself. Narbonne, the war minister, a young man of activity and talents, and Cahier Gerville, a pure and rigid patriot, wished to save the king, by making some sacrifices for the sake of popularity. Bertrand de Molleville and Delessart were their opponents. Delessart, adopting the system of protracting the negotiations with Leopold, heaped additional suspicions on a court already mistrusted. Narbonne, on the contrary, declared his belief, that the people needed nothing to appease them, but pledges of the sincerity of the court; and besought the king to make a quick and peremptory negotiation with Leopold, to convince the nation that he had no sympathy with its enemies. By a still bolder policy, of which the motive was possibly very pure, he sought the confidence of the popular leaders. He prepared for war; he visited the places of strength, restrained the insubordination of the army, and satisfied their just complaints. His appointment of La Fayette to the command of the army shews that he wished well to his country. The popularity of Narbonne rose by those measures: he appeared before the assembly with éclat, and the best of the Girondists openly acknowledged his merits. It appears that he wished to serve Louis by this popularity; but Delessart and Bertrand de Molleville detached him from the king's confidence, by describing him as a presumptuous, and perhaps perfidious, young man. For this contest with Narbonne the two

CHAP.
XXV.
1791.

ministers paid a dear forfeit.' Bertrand had been long suspected of cherishing a deep dislike to the principles of the revolution; his uncommon promptness and firmness in debate saved him for a long time, in the very face of those enemies in the assembly, who owed him a deadly hatred. A vote was, however, at last passed, *'that he lost the confidence of the nation.'*

This was the signal for Delessart's destruction. Negotiations with Leopold were still proceeding; they were still, however, mysterious, and the assembly, urged by its most vehement orators, incessantly demanded an explanation of the intentions of the court of Vienna, and still more imperiously the dispersion of the emigrants assembling on the imperial frontiers. Delessart promised a speedy answer, and an answer, which was supposed (it is not clear on what grounds) to have been concerted between the Austrian and the French minister, was at last delivered; the emperor promised to dissolve the armaments of the emigrants; but it was under this condition, that the king should be respected, and delivered from the ascendancy of clubs. If this should be refused, war was to be denounced. The assembly seemed to feel a sentiment of acknowledgment for the moderation of Leopold: he spoke of the new constitution with respect; he absolved the people of France of the late horrors, and laid them all on the jacobins. In the gloomy hall where those demon jacobins were assembled, a gleam of joy and pride was seen on their countenances, when they were hailed as the masters of the revolution.

Had the Girondists, by one act of that virtue, which it must be owned they displayed in some instances amidst all the wildness of their hancful policy; had they, at this moment, severed themselves from the bloody connection of the jacobin

club, the history of Europe might have been auspiciously changed. But, alas! those philosophers, those men of lamentable genius, were yet grovelling for popularity in the common den of pollution. Delessart demanded of the jacobins, if they would not accept the challenge of Leopold? the cry was for war. Robespierre, for once, stood vanquished in his opposition; nothing remained to Robespierre, for the support of his popularity, but to turn his fury against the ministers and the court.

Narbonne expressed, with great vehemence, the injudicious conduct of his opponents in the cabinet, who, by means of tardy negotiation, furnished such terrible arms to the factious. This minister, had, however, now lost his confidence in the court, and experienced such disgust, that he declared, in a public letter, his intention of retiring. The king read the letter; and, at the instance of his counselors, dismissed him.

On the day the assembly received this intelligence, the constitutionists, who were generally attached to Narbonne, were transported with indignation, and proposed that the court should be addressed in the same language as on the dismissal of Neckar. The Girondists seemed pleased with the proposal; but the restoration of Narbonne was too small an object for their ambition. Forgetting Narbonne, they turned all their force against Delessart. The constitutionists were disconcerted by this unlooked-for perversion of their motion respecting Narbonne. They could not defend the conduct of the court; but in the precipitate ruin of this minister, whom the republicans now attacked, they foresaw the dreadful catastrophe which threatened the throne.

Dumas, Vaublanc, Jacourt,³ and other virtuous

³ In a statement of the events of concise, the English reader may find another country, so cursory and feel little curiosity to know the

CHAP.
XXV.

1791.

patriots of this party, in vain attempted to make the assembly blush for their outrageous denunciation of the accused, when they were called to the solemn function of a jury. But the constitutionists, though alarmed at the progress of indecent persecution, were weaker than usual, for the quarrel of this minister with Narbonne, their representative in the king's council, had alienated the regard of the party. The eloquence of Vergniaud and the Girondists, was drawn out in guilty array against the ill-fated minister. The savagness of the lower jacobins delighted to find any victim. Thus quartered by opposite factions, Delessart was denounced for confidential correspondence with Kaunitz, and the emperor, and dismissed to the high court of Orleans; he took leave of his monarch, under circumstances that wore a mournful similarity to the separation of Strafford from the unfortunate Charles the first.

The humiliation of the court was now so complete, that Louis was obliged to call his new ministers from among the accusers of Delessart. The republicans gave him Dumourier, Servan, Roland, Claviere, and Duranton, for his new cabinet. Dumourier, amidst all the selfish and intriguing levity of his character, appears to have been touched, from his earliest connection with the king, with pity for his misfortunes, and regard for his private virtues. He solicited the confidence of the court, but did not obtain it; what was more unfortunate, they did not withhold this confidence ingenuously, but wished to make use of Dumourier, and deceive him at the same time. Duranton, another of the

names of subordinate notoriety in these troubled scenes. But in noticing the opponents of the latter, and more dreadful part of the revolution, I cannot but feel it due to repeat the names of those virtuous

men, as often as they take any share in the transaction. A name on the side of virtue, ought to be kept as a scarce and sacred relic in speaking of the French revolution.

cabinet, was also prevented, by his compassion, from lending his aid to accelerate the fall of Louis. Roland, Claviere, and Servan, inspired by different sentiments, seemed to regard their republican party in danger, if it should be sullied with pity for a fallen sovereign; and they treated him with harsh and haughty suspicion. Roland was particularly austere. The zeal and the reputation of this minister had an important influence in accelerating the discredit of royalty, and both his zeal and reputation were kept in constant life, by the influence of the most extraordinary woman, whom the world, perhaps, has ever produced. This was his eloquent and accomplished wife. The writings, both political and literary, of Madame Roland, display the graces of her genius, and offer the best apology that is to be made, for her share in a guilty revolution; but they also, unwillingly, betray the great faults of herself and her party. An invincible self-complacency, in the very scenes which should have dictated remorse and humiliation; insane speculation in the midst of affected abstraction; and a disposition to hew society in pieces, for the purpose of putting it together in forms more agreeable to a romantic imagination, such was Madame Roland. At an after period, when we read of her party being swallowed up by those very cannibals, whom the Girondists let loose, but could not recal, a sentiment of regret overcomes the sense of her errors. But let us keep in recollection, to mark the just retribution of Providence, that the party of Roland were, at this very period, the defenders, and the advocates, of an amnesty for the *massacres of Avignon*.

The death of the pacific Leopold, and the war-like wishes of the republicans, put an end to all hopes of peace. Louis, we are informed, foreseeing the fate he had to expect, if a crusade against

CHAP.
XXV.

1792.

the liberty of France should take place, entrusted a mission of secrecy to Mallet du Pan, to dissuade the allied courts from any declaration exceeding the language which Leopold had held out, but the influence of the emigrants defeated the object of this agency; a fact which strongly announces, that the connection of Louis with foreign cabinets, had never been confidential, except in the innocent communication with Kaunitz, to which we have already alluded.

On the 20th of April, Louis went to the assembly, and proposed the declaration of war with the king of Hungary and Bohemia. The gesture, which he could not conceal, the tone of his voice, and countenance, denoted the dreadful precursors which afflicted him; and the assembly seemed to accept with eagerness, but without acknowledgment, the means which a devoted monarch came to lay at their feet, for accomplishing his own destruction. Some feeble cries of *vive le roi* were heard. Melan de Thionville, a peaceable constitutionist, and the monster Robespierre, for reasons essentially different, opposed the motion for war. But the few voices which called for delay, were overwhelmed in the general transport of enthusiasm on the other side. An immense crowd, who had choked all the avenues to the assembly, waited for the decision with impatience, and rent the air with acclamations of joy, when it was announced.

In the meantime, the subjection of the king to his counsellors, continued passive and humiliating, and contributed much to efface every remaining trace of respect for him among the bulk of the people, whose sentiments of respect are so generally assumed at second-hand. The royal family could not stir from their palace, without insults and imprecations; the Thuilleries gardens were filled with ferocious groups. In this desperate state, Louis

formed a secret committee,⁴ who served rather to console, than to assist him. With all the precautions taken to conceal it, it was discovered, and the stolen whispers of three forlorn advisers, were converted, by the calumnies of the jacobins, into plots for laying Paris in ashes.

The employment of the civil-list, was the expiring effort in behalf of royalty. It was lavished, in large sums, for gaining the influence of jacobins, such as Danton, and Fabre de Eglantine, who received immense bribes, and laid out the money in preparing and purchasing their assassins for the 10th of August.⁵

The project of invading Belgium, was the first effort of Demouriez as war-minister. The first disasters of the French arms in this quarter, threw great discredit on the plan. Rochambeau commanded the army which defended Lisle; its advanced guard, by order of the minister, sallied out of the city, and met the Austrians, who were inferior in numbers, but a panic rose, at the first onset, in the French ranks;⁶ the cry of treason was set up; they fled on all hands, and with a cruelty equal to their cowardice, murdered the brave Dillon, who had the misfortune to command them. Another attack, which was directed against Mons, and intended to second the sortie of Lisle, was equally disastrous. The same cry of 'treason' was spread, when the enemy were in full front, and very near, so as to make the flight and pursuit exceedingly bloody. The camp of General Biron was abandoned to the Austrians, and the army retreated to Valenciennes.

The object of the Girondists, was to extort an act of abdication from the king by his terrors and necessities; and for this they spared neither threat

⁴ Bertrand de Molleville, Montmorin, and Malouet.

⁵ Danton is said, by Bertrand, to have received 100,000 crowns.

CHAP.
XXV.
1792.

nor outrage; as the last outrage, they demanded the dismissal of his constitutional guard. This decree was passed, although it was not fulfilled. The day of its dismissal was memorable for one of the stormiest debates which the assembly ever witnessed. The constitutionists made a bold, a firm, an honourable, although a too unsuccessful resistance. Among the heroic and virtuous upholders of the falling throne and falling liberty of the country, whose voices were raised most loudly on this occasion, Girardin was the most distinguished. He predicted the regicide; he drew a striking and melancholy parallel between the dismissal of Charles the first's guards, and those excesses of the English parliament, which, after that event, led him to the scaffold. The Girondists startled at the word regicide, they affected to hold it in abhorrence; folly is the mildest excuse which can be offered for their inconsistency. To make the blow more severe to Louis, they denounced his secret committee, which was now absurdly denominated the Austrian committee. The constitutionists demanded where were the proofs? where was there a trace of writing, to substantiate the alleged correspondence of the committee with Austria? Conspiracies are not written, said the Girondists; and the members of the committee were condemned.—When the Girondists, on their own trial for being conspirators, put the same question, they had the same answer, 'conspiracies are not put on paper;' and they were led to execution.

Foreseeing their own advancement to authority, and the necessity of at last curbing the revolution, the Girondists thought to fortify their power, by calling an armed force round Paris; and they proposed to strengthen the capital by a camp of 20,000 men. The object of this was, at once to accomplish the overthrow of royalty, and to overcome

the people. Some feeble encouragements occurred at this period to the king, to hazard a refusal to the decree. The national guard felt it as an affront to their fidelity, and wrote a petition, signed by 2,000 names, to dissuade their monarch from accepting it. Dumourier, with inclinations still friendly to Louis, exhorted him to resist the latter measure; and La Fayette wrote an indignant letter from the camp, upbraiding the assembly for its abominable submission to the principles of clubs and assassins. When the king's intentions were known, the surly republicanism of Roland was in arms. Unable to write himself, he employed his wife to write a letter to Louis, which was meant, by its eloquence, to freeze his heart with terror: the genius of this woman was well fitted for gloomy declamation, and there was such an affectation of virtuous sentiments in the mischievous letter which she produced, that its effect on the public may be well considered, as one of the death-blows of expiring monarchy. The king could no longer act with ministers, who were his devoted enemies, and dismissed them.⁶

The insurrection of the 20th of June, was one of the first fruits of this event. The rabble of the faubourg St. Antoine, armed with pikes, marched to the assembly. The constitutionists called aloud for refusing their admittance; but, at the instance of the republicans, they were allowed to file through the hall. They proceeded from thence, unresisted by any efforts of the constituted authority, to the Thuilleries, a cannon was dragged into the very apartment of the king, and the infuriated crowd rushed in with imprecations. Louis received them, not so much with the dignity of a king, as with the

⁶ Viz. Roland, Servan, and Claviere; Dumouriez and the other two remained.

CHAP.
XXV.

1722

intrepidity of an honest man; he heard their petition, which was couched in insulting language, and replied to it with firmness and moderation. While he protested zeal for the constitution, he declared that nothing should drive him from exerting the rights with which that constitution had invested him; he maintained, for some minutes, a peaceable conference with some of the chiefs of the insurrection. A drunk and ferocious rioter came up to him with the red cap of liberty, and placed it on the head which had been robbed of a diadem; he wore it with a complaisance, which softened the hearts of the insurgents; but nothing could extort from him the promise of revoking his veto. At last the tumult was quieted, by a commission from the assembly, who found the king sitting at a table, surrounded by a group of intoxicated men, in the midst of whom he preserved a serene and benevolent calmness, which, perhaps, had been the only means of saving him from the rudest indignities.

It appears, however, that the tumult had been conjured up, not to extinguish, but only to insult royalty. Santerre, who was regarded as its chief promoter, approached the queen, and told her, she had nothing to fear on a day, which the people had chosen to *warn, and not to strike.*

Some circumstances attending this day, restored a temporary hope to the constitutionists. The king had maintained a severe trial with firmness; he made no sacrifices, not even promises. His new ministers seemed determined to make preparations against the recurrence of a similar outrage. The gardens of the Thuilleries were shut, and some severe proclamations were made against sedition. The national guard murmured loudly at the state of insignificance to which they were reduced; the king and queen applauded their zeal, and employ-

ed every means to attach to themselves some chosen companies on whom reliance could be placed in the day of danger. A vast number of the inhabitants of Paris signed a petition for the punishment of the late insurgents; their numbers were reported to be 20,000. Petion was deposed from his functions, by the departments of Paris, for having evidently favoured the commotions of the 20th of June, and almost all the other departments of France petitioned for vengeance on the insurgents of that day. Vain protestations, vain signatures, which only cloaked, for a while, the cowardice and pusillanimity of the public. The king himself was not consoled by those symptoms, which gave a gleam of hope to his advisers. "I have seen," said he, "that they wish to assassinate me, and though I know not why I have escaped assassination, I know it will one day come. If I were alone, I should risk every attempt, Oh! if my wife and my children were not with me, they should see that I am not so feeble as they imagine; but what would their lot be if the attempt miscarried!"

While the voice of royal indignation was yet heard in Paris, an important occasion occurred to be the test of its sincerity; when it was suddenly known that La Fayette had quitted his army, was in Paris, and was come to demand retribution on the late degraders of the constitution. It was thought, at first, that he had brought some chosen companies along with him; but he was only accompanied by a small party of his staff. Presenting himself in the face of the assembly, he demanded vengeance on the insurgents of 20th of June; and a general punishment of the incendiaries, whose intentions to overthrow the constitution, were avowed in their clubs, and their publications. The enemies of this brave man were struck with fear, or affected with involuntary respect; for he

CHAP.
XXV

1792

threatened his enemies, at the very moment when he was in their power. The constitutionists rallied round him, and partook of his intrepidity; even the jacobins returned shouts of applause. The ablest Girondist found their eloquence unavailing against this virtuous soldier. His petition was triumphantly voted to be referred to a committee, who should be called to scrutinize the sources of the late disorders. From the assembly, La Fayette repaired to the palace of the Tuilleries, where he received some affected symptoms of regard from the royal family, and in return, he offered to devote himself to their deliverance. But it cannot be denied that the royal family, most fatally for themselves, retained a hatred for the father of the revolution, which ought well to have been stifled towards a present benefactor. The court shewed an alienation which thwarted all the general's intentions. Nor did the national guards seem more devoted to him, who had been once their idol; they remained undecided and silent. When Fayette returned to his house at night, he was honoured with some triumphant acclamations; but a few officers of his army, and two or three hundred national guards formed his whole retinue, which was unprofitably increased by a few curious spectators. He shewed satisfaction in his countenance, but the coolness, or rather cowardice of the national guard had struck a deep despair to his heart. Had he seen in the national guard any eagerness to follow him, his design was to have marched immediately against the jacobins, to have dispersed them with disgrace, and to have shut the doors of their assembly. These savages themselves trembled for this event; the people on whom they counted, had abandoned them. Robespierre shrunk back into all the natural cowardice of his character, and abandoned himself to monotonous lamentations for the evils of

his country. Their fears were unhappily never realized. At the moment, when some officers spoke of marching against them, the train of La Fayette insensibly diminished. He remained some days at Paris, and still found the same backwardness among his friends, and the same stupor among his enemies. Repeatedly were parties of the national guards invited to different points of rendezvous; as often they broke their promise, or arrived irresolute and discouraged. The court continued equally languid, and either felt or feigned complete despair. Convinced that the king could no longer be safe in a city, which shewed so little interest in his dangers, La Fayette suggested a plan of conducting Louis to the army; but the king and queen dreaded the attempt, the latter especially regarded it as the consummation of her misfortunes, to be indebted for her safety to La Fayette.

Mortified, and at last, tired with his useless efforts, the general quitted Paris: never did a project of so much courage and virtue, meet such unmerited misfortune. His departure was a holiday for the jacobins: they sallied out from their cowardly retreats, and avenged their late panic, by burning him in effigy. The infamous Orleans presided over the ceremony, in the Palais Royal. The mind of the king, perhaps, repenting the neglected offers of La Fayette, was, at this period, observed to be overwhelmed with a nearer view of his fate, and given over to the most excessive anguish. He read incessantly the history of Charles I, striving to find expedients for avoiding the fate of that monarch, by avoiding the faults into which he had fallen. From time to time he was visited by devoted friends of his cause, who had long lived at a distance from the court; but who could not now estrange themselves in his afflictions. Among

CHAP.
XXV.

1792

those who came to offer him an unavailing devotion was the virtuous Malherbes. The king consoled himself with their sympathy; but they wakened his sensibility only to enervate his courage. Innumerable projects of saving him, by flight, were at that time suggested. The ex-minister Narbonne, honourably forgetting the enmity of the court, had sketched a plan of this nature, in which his own safety would have been imminently hazarded; but, though he sought the court, the court could not forgive him; and the pride of the queen revolted at the thought of receiving protection from a constitutionist. La Rochefoucault Liancourt, concerted another scheme, and had adjusted all his measures in preparation for carrying them off to Rouen in Normandy, a city which was known to be loyal, and where some regiments were ready to devote themselves to the royal defence. Rochefoucault was a known patriot, although his patriotism had never weakened his respect for Louis. Louis seemed to accept of his project, but the queen could not owe her safety to a patriot.

The operations of the war continued to be slow and feeble. The Austrian army could not have defended the Low countries, if they had had armies of better discipline to oppose. General Luckner, who had taken the command of the army of the north, had, at first, obtained a success too easy to be glorious. He had possessed himself of the cities of Ypres, Menin, and Courtray; but, at the moment when it was expected he should have entered Belgium, he suddenly evacuated those three cities. What rendered the danger still more pressing, was the approach of a formidable Prussian army, commanded by Frederic William and the duke of Brunswick, estimated at 60,000 men, with the finest cavalry which Europe had ever seen,

A horde of emigrants formed the advanced-guard, and a corps of 15,000 Austrians were to support it: its leaders, were some of the most celebrated names in the seven years war. To support the courage of the people against these awful approaches, it was judged necessary to have a new oath of federation administered on the anniversary of the 14th of July: the king attended it, and received, from the multitude, every mark of insult and suspicion.

But the undecided fate of royalty could no longer be endured by either class of the divided republicans. The Girondists had in view to accomplish its abolition, by an open proposal in the assembly. The jacobins were impatient for a bloody insurrection, which should carry their revolution at the point of the dagger. Danton, Fabre de Egmontine, and others of their chiefs, as we have seen, were in the secret pay of the court: they informed the court of the meditated blow; 'but we propose it,' said they, 'in our clubs, only to push matters to such an excess, that, by involving the Girondists as the leaders of the republicans, in this rumour we may disgrace them.' The court hated the Girondists, as they well might, and gave money to the jacobin renegadoes, who laid it out in purchasing arms for assassins. The views of the Girondists were less atrocious; but they knew of the approaching storm, and either were themselves unable to prevent it, or, by keeping aloof from the direction of it, thought to be the arbiters of those who should contend for it; and, finally, make themselves masters of it. It is said, indeed, in testimony to their memory, that they offered their aid to the court; but what kind of aid? it was an offer of assisting Louis, if he would put himself entirely in their power. On the eve of a massacre, it was no virtue to make so degrading a proposal; by a

CHAP.
XXV
1792.

fair and open union with the constitutionists, altogether independent of the court, they could have averted ten thousand calamities.

The arrival of a band of Marseillois in Paris, the open rumours of the attempt, and even the bloodshed of a few of the national guards, whose indignation had led them to affront the assassins in one of their indecent orgies; these, and other circumstances, ushered in the approach of a dreadful day. The constitutionists yet supported a bold countenance in the assembly; they defended La Fayette, who had been accused by the Girondists; they even obtained a decree for his acquittal. Dumas and Vaublanc, the very heroes of humanity, endear us to their names at this period, when we find them rallying the last virtue of the assembly to meet the approaching storm. At the period when their path to the assembly was beset by the threats of infuriated groups; when even the butchery of some of their unpopular party had commenced, they daily met the republicans in debate; they called loudly on the municipality to take measures against insurrection; they exclaimed against the inactivity of Petion, who received the most pressing admonitions of the impending havoc, without taking one measure to prevent it. In the meantime, the chiefs of the jacobins, who had assembled at Charenton, concerted the whole plan of their attack, and the conduct of it was entrusted to Westermann, afterwards so distinguished for his cruelty in the Vendéan war; while the Girondists, without courage to participate the perpetration, shared passively in the crime, by continuing their invectives against La Fayette, and moving for the dethronement of Louis.

The terrible sound of the tocsin, on the 10th of August, at last announced the expected rising. The court, and the principal posts of the Tuil-

leries, had been occupied by the Swiss guards; and even before the knell of the alarm-bell, some companies of the national guards had hastened to the castle. The interior of the castle was filled with 700 or 800 loyal gentlemen, who had voluntarily devoted themselves to the king on this awful occasion. The bulk of the Parisian national guards, by degrees, assembled around the gardens. The unfortunate monarch went out to review his defenders. At the moment when his intrepidity should have risen, the sensibility, or the weakness, of his heart overcame him: he addressed his troops with no zeal that could inspire them, but appeared to be lost in mournful presentiments. As he proceeded through the ranks farthest from the castle, the cries of *vive le roi* grew fainter and fainter; as he went on, they were changed into murmurs and imprecations: it was at last necessary to return. The queen appeared with more dignity; and Madame Elizabeth, while her heart was frozen with terror, assumed so much command of herself, as to address the defenders of the castle, in a speech which was received with enthusiasm. It was resolved, for a moment, to sally out from the castle, and anticipate the attack; but the resolution seemed too desperate for the king to adopt. Petion appeared at this moment; a cry of rage and of joy was raised when he was seen. He was seized for some time as an hostage; but an order of the assembly speedily relieved him. He was not allowed to depart, however, without being forced to sign an order for the troops to resist force by force.

At the sight of such alienation among the national guards, every hope had abandoned the heart of Louis. He threw himself, in despair, on the advice of the syndic Rhœderer, who exhorted him, as the sole means of salvation, to repair to the as-

CHAP.
XXV

1792.

sembly. ‘I will go then,’ said Louis, ‘with my whole family; and may they remember, that I have left no sacrifice unoffered, to save bloodshed.’ The queen herself seemed willingly to embrace the proposal. Madame Elizabeth alone approached Rhoderer, and said, with a voice of inexpressible grief,—‘Be answerable, sir, for the consequences of your advice to the king; be answerable for the life of my brother.’ When the royal fugitives took leave of their guards, at the palace, a deep silence prevailed. Their devoted defenders seemed to ask, by their melancholy looks,—‘What is to be our fate? where is our refuge?’ The queen said to those around her,—‘We shall soon return.’ A sad prediction was involuntarily answered from every heart,—‘*They will never return.*’ They left the Thuilleries, to pass through a multitude, who pursued them with cries of ‘*death.*’ The press was for a while so great, that a deputation from the assembly was obliged to reach them, and precede them to that sad asylum. There entered the group, consisting of the king, the queen, Madame Elizabeth, the princess royal, Madame de Tourzel and two companions of the queen, and a grenadier, who carried the dauphin in his arms. The massacres of the 10th of August are in general minutely known; and there is nothing in their nature that invites superfluous repetition. The party of the constitutionists ceased from that day, and many of their most virtuous patriots fell by assassination; yet this carnival of horror was seven years celebrated in Paris as a holiday. That the cause of the constitution was irretrievable, appeared from the flight of La Fayette from the army, which immediately followed this event. His soldiers indeed knew of his intended desertion, and bore their commander too much affection to detain him; but their regard went no farther, they

could no longer be opposed as a bulwark to the progress of anarchy. The grand fruit of their bloody insurrection to the jacobins was, the nomination of a new commune of Paris, chosen from their own club, at the head of which Robespierre presided. The assembly in vain opposed his new, his malign, but irresistible, influence. The commune commanded a force of 100,000 insurgents, perpetually equipped. Crowds of this disposable force crowded the tribunes, and overawed the debates of the assembly.

The irritation of the public mind was still aggravated by the prospect of external invasion. On the news of the 10th of August, the king of Prussia had redoubled his activity and his boldness. The name of the great Frederic, the remembrance of his victories, had impressed Europe with respect for the Prussian arms. The duke of Brunswick, who was named the generalissimo of this army, had been pointed out by Frederick himself, and by the opinion of Europe, as the greatest commander of the time, and under him were several generals, who had seen much service in the seven years war. Twenty thousand emigrants, commanded by the king's brothers, formed the advanced guard. This chivalrous troop, where almost every soldier had been a gentleman, formed, by its luxury and its presumption, a striking contrast with the discipline and the flegm of the Germans. The successes of the emigrants seemed, at first, to justify their hopes. Luckner, with his weak and indisciplined army, could find no defensive position; he was forced from his camp of Fontoi, and obliged to fly for shelter to a fortified position. A portion of the frontier being opened by this precipitate retreat, Longwy was invaded. This place, if it had been well defended, and well provided, might have arrested the enemy a long time; but

CHAP.
XXV

1792

it surrendered, after two summonses and fifteen hours of bombardment. The inhabitants were accused of treason, because, when they saw their houses on fire, they had assembled, and demanded of the *etat-major* of the place, that their gates should be opened to the Prussians. Louis was also accused, on his trial, of having left Longwy defenceless. Both accusations were, in all probability, equally unjust. By a striking contradiction, Lavergne, the commandant of Longwy, was condemned for having delivered up, without resistance, a place well provided and fortified; and Louis for having left it defenceless. The king of Prussia took possession of it in the name of Louis XVI; and not doubting that all the frontier cities would receive him with equal facility, he detached 15,000 men to lay siege to Thionville, and advanced in person, with the same rapidity, upon Verdun. The corps of Clairfait turned upon Stenai, and took possession of it. Thus the territories of France were invested, and yet the French armies made no movement. It was not expected that Verdun would long retard the progress of the conqueror; its reduction was as quick as that of Longwy. On leaving the council of war, which determined on capitulation, the commandant of Verdun blew out his brains with a pistol.

When these disastrous news reached Paris, the people became furious with apprehension. Robespierre, Danton, and the commune of Paris, saw in these defeats the means of triumphing over those rivals who yet remained to be conquered; they took delight in spreading abroad, that the Girondists beheld with indifference the approach of the enemy to Paris; that their project was to retire beyond the Loire, and there to found independent republics, of which each of their chiefs was to be the separate governor. This accusation,

which served as a pretext for so many crimes, and which, for a long time, was developed under the absurd romance of federation, was founded on some unguarded words, which were ascribed to the chiefs of the Girondé. The last resource of retreating behind the Loire had often been presented to their imagination; they thought they saw more republican energy in the south than in the north; but they were not the less determined to have maintained a defence before Paris, if the enemy had pushed their conquests so far.

The Girondists, who had so often drawn the assembly against its own wishes, while they were attacking the court, could not obtain one rigorous measure against the commune of Paris, whom it hated much, and dreaded still more. The commune preserved Pétion at its head, only to degrade and constrain him. It announced an intention of prosecuting, as traitors, Vergniaud, Gaudet, Gensonné, and Brissot. It had already threatened the minister Roland with proscription.

The reign of terror, and of assassination, proscription, confiscation, and domiciliary visits, was now begun; and along with it the too tardy repentance of the Girondists. A series of enormities, during the latter end of August, which are too shocking and frightful to detail, at last inspired them with stronger resolutions to press for the accusation of the bloody commune. The history of this epoch, when the commune appeared at the bar of the assembly, records a defence of their enormities, from the mouth of Tallien, which equals in atrocity whatever has been uttered by human depravity. 'Legislators,' said he, 'the provisional representatives of the commune of Paris have been calumniated. We have given no order against the liberty of good citizens; but we take glory to ourselves for having sequestered the goods of emi-

CHAP. grés; we have arrested conspirators, and sent them
XXV. before tribunals, for their own safety, and that of
1792. the state; we have dispersed monks and religious
orders, to sell the houses which they occupied; we have proscribed incendiary journals;⁶ they corrupted the public opinion; we have made domiciliary visits, and put arms into the hands of patriots; we have caused the refractory priests to be arrested; *they are shut up in a particular house, and in a few days the soil of liberty shall be purged of their presence.* While the assembly sat panic-struck at these words, the galleries thundered with applauses; and a mob, who repeated their cries of *vive la commune*, demanded entrance, to file through the hall. The assembly broke up, without coming to a resolution, and the communes remained victorious.

Another insurrection was yet required to fulfil the direful words of Tallien: new lists of proscriptions were made out, at the hotel of that functionary, who, in the perversion of human language, was called the minister of justice. The approach of the invading armies was made the pretext; but alas! it was the blood of more defenceless victims that was destined to be drawn. Danton came forth to the assembly, to announce the measures that were taken for public safety. 'The cannon,' said he, 'is to sound; it is not to be the knell of alarm, but the charging-step against our enemies; to conquer them, to trample them down. What is required of us? Boldness; yet boldness, and for ever boldness.' In pronouncing these words, the voice and gesture of this minister of extermination struck a terror through the assembly, which can be better conceived than de-

⁶ I. e. the journals which had been spoken irreverently of the jacobins, many of the conductors of which were torn to pieces by the individuals whom they had exposed.

scribed. An arrete of the commune, calling the citizens to arms, and to prepare for marching against the enemy, was the prelude to this inhuman catastrophe.

CHAP.
XXV.

1792.

On the 2^d of September, exactly at two o'clock, the *generale* was beat, the tocsin sounded, and the guns were discharged. The most of the inhabitants of Paris resorted, as their safest asylum, to the rendezvous of their different sections. The general wish, the general enthusiasm, was to march immediately against the enemy. Terrified at the prospect of dangers nearer at hand, it is probable that the Parisians rather feigned than felt this enthusiasm. Those braggarts, who had not fortitude to crush an handful of assassins, talked of rushing out against the combined armies. But no such idea was in the head of the Septembrizers. The committee of surveyance, directed by Marat, had already given his orders to his butchers, and endeavoured to drive the last remains of human feeling from their hearts. Robespierre, Collot d'Herbois, and Billaud Varennes, harangued them in turn. 'Magnanimous people,' said the last, 'you are marching to glory or to death; unfortunate are we who cannot follow you: but leave us not, at least, in the power of those who will murder your wives and children in your absence.' 'Death, death! to those enemies,' was the cry in answer. Spirituous liquors were then plentifully distributed to the crowd, and additional presents in money bestowed on those whose fanaticism seemed to flag. The inebriated tigers were then let loose on their enemies; on men, alas, locked up in dungeons, and bound with chains.

The scenes of horrors which consummated those preparatives, are such as history can scarcely dare to look upon. All that freezes the heart in recital, all that startles us from the page, to execrate, or

CHAP.

XXV.

1794

to weep for, human creatures; all that makes us cling, with terror, to the blessed subordination of peace, are comprehended in the picture of those few, but dreadful, days. The pen of an able historian,* from whose narrative I can but trace a faint epitome of these times, has recorded, amidst those massacres, some traits of heroic suffering, some scenes of filial love interposing between the victim and the dagger; of daughters shielding with their arms, and not in vain, the grey heads of their fathers; of friends delivered by friends, in the moment and convulsions of expected death; which give a touching relief to what were else an uniform horror.

For four days the massacres continued, during the bloodiest of which, the assembly was employed in debating *on the coinage of small money*!!!

Four or five thousand of the prisoners perished; only two or three hundred were saved. On the 5^d of September, the commissaries of the commune appeared at the bar of the assembly, to give an account of their labours: they assured the assembly, that Paris enjoyed profound repose; but the massacres lasted till the 6th: they extolled the virtue of the assassins, who punished, with their own hands, such of their numbers as had discredited their enterprize with robbery: they justified their own conduct for having sent no succours to the prisons, because the defence of the barriers demanded such numbers. ‘In fact,’ added they, ‘what excited the just vengeance of the people was, that none were confined in those prisons *but such as were well known to be miscreants*.’ The assembly heard these horrible explanations, without daring to manifest its indignation. Roland alone had the courage to invoke the laws and humanity against the sanguinary commune. The

* La Fayette.

same minister, who might now so deeply read the moral of his own political errors in the fruits of its success, sought humanely, but in vain to save another list of the devoted; namely, the prisoners of the high court of Orleans, men whom the tribunal beheld to be innocent, and would not condemn, but whom they had not courage to dismiss, through fear of the bloody communique. Those unhappy men were met on their way to Paris, and of fifty-three, only three escaped the massacre. The venerable Rochefoucault, who had, in better days, presided over the department of Paris, was a few days after butchered by the same instigation, while the arms of his wife and his daughter clung round him, in vain embraces to protect him.

In the midst of these horrors, the Girondists cherished, I know not with what reason, some hopes that the expected dissolution of the assembly, and the election of the convention, would enable them to maintain the unequal combat with the jacobins. The members of the new assembly were now electing; and such was the reputation of the Girondists for patriotism, that the jacobins themselves, in the departments, were seen to choose them for representatives. They reckoned, therefore, on a majority, and on saving themselves and their country, if the assassins should leave them alive till the commencement of the convention. For some time it was dubious, whether their existence should be so far prolonged; for the more decisive members of the commune proposed carrying the danger into the very bosom of the assembly, and prostrating the constitutionists in a common execution with those republicans, who, they said, had divided their country only to ruin it. This execution was, however, arrested. The eloquence of Vergniaud inspired the assembly with a resolution to defend themselves, if an attack

CHAP.
XXV.

1792

should be made, and the warriors, like true tigers, turned back from every prey which had the attitude and character of self-defence.

Had the armies of Prussia advanced nearer the capital, these massacres would have yielded but a small portion of the blood which Marat, Robespierre, and Danton, were determined to have shed; but these invaders had but a transient success. At the moment, when most of the military and political speculators of Europe expected to see Frederic William at Paris, he was arrested in the plains of Champagne, by the rigours of an inclement season, by his own indecision, by an army devoid, it is true, of all discipline and experience, but which increased on all sides, by the address and fortune of Dumourier, and the talents of Kellerman.

Dumourier, flattered by the high appointment of generalissimo, assembled the feeble remains of the French armies, which were separated at considerable distances. La Fayette had before been anxious for this reunion, and had ordered Dumourier, who was then under his command, to abandon the camp at Maulde, and join him under the walls of Sedan. The latter had disobeyed, with a boldness which approached to revolt. He did not, however, persist in this fault, when the ruin of his rival was certain. He abandoned French Flanders to its strong places, and repaired to the army of La Fayette, which he found in confusion and despair, by the loss of their general. This army afforded him only 17,000 men; but they were the best disciplined troops which France, at that period, possessed. At the head of these, he undertook a most daring enterprise. The king and his army were now delayed at Verdun, awaiting the completion of the conquest of that place, by the most abundant and solid supplies. The defiles of Argonne were a formidable position; of these

the duke of Brunswick, too late, attempted to take possession, when 5000 men of Dumourier's army, under Dillon, had seized them already, while reinforcements were daily arriving to strengthen them, and to embarrass all the movements of the enemy.

The Prussians had successively to attack several defiles, from the 10th to the 15th of September, in which they shewed little of that superiority which report had attached to the German tactics. Dumourier was, however, forced from his positions, and thought himself fortunate to have maintained them until two considerable armies approached to his support; the one from Flanders, under Bourdonville; the other from Lorraine, with Kellerman at its head. Dumourier accomplished a junction with them, with less difficulty than he had reason to apprehend.

These retrograd movements brought him to the city of Chalons, where he was met by a rabble of the indisciplined troops, who had been levied at Paris, under the frightful alarms of the 2^d of September. He saw no other use that could be made of such troops, than to impose upon the enemy by an appearance of force; but he could not long support the illusion. Fifteen hundred Austrian Hussars, who discovered the September levies, encountered 10,000 of them, and put them to rout. They fled back to Chalons, and there spread the terror, of which their cowardice had set so good an example. If Dumourier had not arrived in time to quiet this disorder, Paris would have soon seen at its walls those same troops, who had left the city for fear of a massacre, and would have returned to it for fear of a battle. But this slight success could not ensure the Prussian arms against the more fatal hostility of the season.

Since the arrival of their army on the French territory, the autumn, which is usually delightful

CHAP.
XXV.

1792

in France, had been wet and stormy; and the country through which they had to pass was proverbial in France for its sterility. Anticipating an easy conquest, the duke of Brunswick had taken little precautions for provisions. His communications were now become excessively difficult; he had been obliged to detach 15,000 men to lay siege to Thionville, or rather to make the shew of a siege; for its reduction was expected to be like that of Longwy. But, though Thionville was ill-provided, the besiegers were still worse. General Wimpfen, an ex-deputy of the constituent assembly, and of the party of La Fayette, commanded the garrison. His courage was necessarily increased by his indignation at the treatment which had been offered, with so much barbarity and so little policy, to his friend the unfortunate La Fayette. He disconcerted all the plans of the enemy, who at last saw, with regret, the absurdity of besieging a fort, without artillery to make a breach in the ramparts.

Frederic William, like all characters which are at once haughty and weak, soon fell from the excess of presumption into the most melancholy discouragement. He assembled the chiefs of the emigrants, and loaded them with reproaches. 'Behold, gentlemen,' said he, 'the effect of the hopes and promises with which you seduced us. Where are now those columns of Frenchmen, who were to pour, by the hour into our camp? Where are the acclamations of welcome that were to meet us? where are our succours from the country, or in what respect does our reception differ from that of invaders? What is the good of our advancing, when, at every step, we leave dangers behind us greater than those which are opposed to us?' The brothers of Louis would have answered, if they had dared, that the emigrants were

not the only persons who had thought so sanguinely of invading France. They besought the king to attempt a decisive blow on the revolutionary armies, that should put them at once to the rout. The duke of Brunswick saw his forces daily wasting under the rigours of the season, and of famine; but, though he distrusted the presumption of the emigrants, he resolved to make one other effort for opening an entrance into France.

General Kellerman arrived on the 17th of September, to the left of Dumourier, and encamped on the heights of Walmy, a position which the duke of Brunswick was determined to force. This was the first scene of success to the French arms. On the 20th of September, the duke tried them from seven till ten in the morning, with a brisk cannonade upon their advanced guard. They supported his fire for a considerable time; but at last were obliged to retire to the heights which they had first occupied. At ten, the action became general. The Prussian cavalry advanced with their usual spirit; but the nature of the ground opposing their progress, the action became an incessant cannonade. Their artillery was warmly, but unskilfully, served: the French saw, with satisfaction, that all their bullets flew over their heads: they made a pleasantry of the hostile fire; and, levelling their own with much superior skill, kept unassailable in their position. The small accident of a shell falling on one of their magazines was the only part of the action which cost the French blood. Towards night, the Prussian artillery-ribs sunk under the fatigues of thirteen hours firing; and the French saw, with joy, that the duke of Brunswick, with all the superiority of his troops, could make no impression on their post.

The next day discovered a scene of perfect de-

CHAP.
XXV.

1792.

solation in the Prussian camp. It was not the loss of 1000 men, which the action of yesterday had cost them, that excited this deep consternation: it was an army without food to eat, with nothing but infected water to drink, sinking under disease, and exposed, without cover, to the inclemency of the skies. Thus extenuated and dying, they vented their miseries on the emigrants, whom they cursed as the authors of all their misfortunes. A grand council of war was assembled, where the king of Prussia appeared, with dejection in every line of his countenance. The duke of Brunswick did not dissemble the danger of their position: a French army, under Biron and Custine, was ready to act upon the Rhine; no preparations in the Palatinate had been made to oppose them; the siege of Thionville was raised; the corps of the Austrian army which menaced French Flanders, had not yet obtained any decisive success, and was even arrested in its progress before the walls of Lisle; Dumourier was incessantly receiving new reinforcements. From these circumstances, the duke concluded, that it was necessary to treat with the French general for the security of his retreat. The king of Prussia coincided with his opinion.

The mention of retreat came like a thunderbolt on the emigrants. These men, who formed a separate army, under the two brothers of the king, and the Marshals Broglie and De Castres, had supported every fatigue and disgust, to which their situation exposed them, in hope to obtain at last a decisive battle. They now heard the proposal of a flight without a battle; a flight which must devote them to misery, to opprobrium, to death. The count d'Artois came to express their affliction to the king of Prussia and the duke of Brunswick, and supplicated them to lay aside this fatal resolution;

but their allies seemed to listen with contempt. No mention was now made of the misfortunes of the emigrants, none but of their imprudence. As a last favour, they entreated to be left to themselves, to form the new attack. 'We flatter ourselves,' said the count d'Artois, 'that we shall yet open a passage to the city, where assassins are perhaps preparing, at this moment, to shed the blood of our august brother.' Even this was refused to them. It is said that their demand was aided by General Clairfayt, who commanded an Austrian corps of 15,000 men. Already the king of Prussia had sent to open negotiations with Dumourier; and General Kalkreuth and he had agreed on several points. The mysteries of this negotiation have not been yet well developed, although there is reason to suppose that they are reducible to a very few articles. A most improbable supposition was for some time credited, that the revolutionists prevailed on the Prussian monarch and the duke of Brunswick, by considerable sums of money, to retreat. It is certain, that the revolutionists had no considerable sums to offer; and, if they had, they would have made a different use of them. The character of the king of Prussia leaves no room for such a supposition; that of the duke of Brunswick refutes it.

Another, and a less injurious, motive has been ascribed to the king of Prussia, as contributing to this retreat, viz. the solicitation of the unfortunate Louis, who, it is pretended, wrote from his prison to inform him, that inevitable death must attend himself and the royal family, if the Prussians should approach nearer the capital. But this circumstance has been rendered dubious by more recent testimonies. Louis invariably denied, to all who had his confidence, that he ever wrote such a letter. But even allowing that such a letter ever

CHAP.
XXV.

1792.

existed, which is far from being evident, it could only be the pretext, and not the motive for this retreat.

The convention between Frederic William and Dumourier has never been made public; but it is without doubt, that the French commander promised not to harass the retreat of the king; and that the king engaged to surrender Longwy and Verdun. The Austrians were not consulted in the affair. Dumourier gave to understand, that he was to turn all his force against them, and secure the conquest of the Low countries. The king of Prussia appeared to see, without regret, the sacrifice of an ally, whom he had excited to this fatal expedition, without taking a just share either in its dangers or expences. It may be guessed how Frederic William would have conducted this retreat, if he had had an obstinate general or an experienced army to deal with. But Dumourier kept his troops at such a distance from the retiring army, that he seemed rather to convoy than to pursue them. The victors and the vanquished most cordially agreed in making their vengeance fall on the miserable emigrants. These men were constantly left at the last posts and the rear-guard, where the aged and infirm, who could not keep up with the march of the army, fell into the hands of the French, and were immediately shot. The Prussian hussars pillaged them with impunity. These cruelties, it is said, were revolting to the humane disposition of the duke of Brunswick; but he could not put a stop to them. The Prussians left their route covered with the dead. An expedition, which did not produce the glory of one battle, cost Frederic William the greater part of those treasures which Frederic the Great had left to his successor, for wiser and better undertakings.

Thinned, at last, to nearly a half of its com-

batants, this army escaped, with joy, out of a country which seemed to have struck them with its malediction; but new combats yet awaited them. General Custine soon after invaded the Palatinate, and possessed himself of Spires and Worms. The city of Mentz itself offered him no resistance. To arrest this career, the king of Prussia proceeded against him.

CHAP.
XXV.

1794.

. CHAP. XXVI.

Events and dispositions in England preparatory to the war. . . . Debates of parliament. . . . Dismission of Chauvelin. . . . Opening of the national convention in France. . . . Aspect of the two parties. . . . Expedition of the French, under Montesquieu, into Savoy. . . . Annexation of his conquest to the departments of the republic. . . . Humane negociation of Montesquieu with Geneva. . . . Successes of Custine. . . . New and successful campaign of Dumourier. . . . Conquest of Belgium. . . . Execution of Louis XVI.

CHAP.
XXVI
1792.

IN consequence of the events of the 10th of August, our ambassador, Lord Gower, was recalled from Paris. Within a few weeks from that dreadful era, the decree of the convention, which promised assistance to every people who should be disposed to throw off the tyranny of their government; and the rapid advances of the republicans towards Holland, with the resolution expressed by France to open the navigation of the Scheldt, accelerated the preparations of England for an active share in the anti-gallican coalition. Widely different, indeed, was now the prospect opened to England, from that picture of affairs which Mr. Pitt had drawn at the close of the last session. The violation of neutral territory, of territory, too, belonging to an ancient ally; the danger of Belgium continuing in the possession of the French; and the decree which promised assistance to the overthrow of every regular government these were the circumstances declared by the ministerial party in England to render a war inevitably neces-

sary. The public mind, upon the whole, seconded this opinion; and, what was more powerful than deliberate opinion, the general feelings of the country were in arms against the principles and practices of the French. A small, and but a small, portion of the people, a few societies of the lowest of men, disclosed fanatical sentiments, congenial to the principles of France. The indignation of the fervid loyalists magnified the importance of these antagonists, and made them still more impatient to break every peaceable connection with a country, which was supposed to foster and to multiply such traitorous agents. Is it unfair to say, that in one class of those who were loudest in demanding war, there were men, of principles not dissimilar to that odious spirit which dictated the crusade of Frederic William against the infant liberties of France; of that spirit, which turned the sword against Poland, and which rejoiced in the very crimes that now polluted the name of liberty? But, if it were so in a few instances, at the dreadful period we describe, it was not the bad, but the generous, prejudices of Englishmen, to which the advocates for war could most successfully appeal. 'Your allies are attacked; the laws of nations are violated by Frenchmen; the agents of discord are fraternized by those atrocious men, whose hands are yet reeking with the blood of the 10th of August and the 2^d of September, and whose armies are spread abroad, like those of Mahomet, with the koran of sedition in one hand, and the sword in the other.' By this view of the necessity of the war, the majority of the nation was converted to the doctrine of the alarmists.

There were men who viewed the necessity of the war in a different light, and who, without sympathy in the crimes of the republic, considered it safer to avert, than to provoke, a contest with its delirious

CHAP.
XXVI.
—
1792.

energies. To combat a nation of enthusiasts, who were fighting, or believed themselves fighting, in the cause of liberty, was to rouse a spirit and a strength, unknown to the former existence of France; it was to teach her war by experience, and change her mobs into disciplined armies. It was predicted, and it has been fulfilled, that France would rise more gigantic from the struggle. 'Was war so slight an evil,' it was asked, 'to this commercial country, that all the blessings of peace should be renounced, without an effort to prolong them? We had no public agent, no representative of our interests in France: was renouncing all treaty and connection with France, the way to avert a war? and was it lawful to say, that war was inevitable, while a possible opening to peace was wilfully avoided?' But 'the present rulers of France,' it was answered, 'could not be treated with. It was not possible to treat with them; it would have been a degradation, if it had been possible.' To this it was replied, 'that the possibility was not fairly tried. With respect to its degrading our dignity, if an effort to save the miseries of war to our country was to be called a degradation, it was an abuse of human language. Denmark and Sweden treated for neutrality, and who ever heard of their degradation? Prussia was degraded by treating with the very government of the terrorists, but the shame rose from her war, and not her pacification. If the influx of French principles,' it was added, 'was so much dreaded, it were better to guard the constitution by precautionary means, (and there were many, which the remaining loyalty of the nation could insure), than to rush wantonly into war, and oppress the people with taxes, which might exercise their patience, but never could increase their satisfaction.'

Such were the views and language of parties,

when a most extraordinary speech from the throne opened the session, at an earlier period than that to which it had been prorogued. The alarming disaffection of the country, it was stated in the royal address, had occasioned this unusual summons; and had obliged his majesty to embody a part of the militia, for the security of the lawful powers. In the war of the continent, his majesty declared, 'that he had hitherto sought to preserve neutrality, but that he saw, with uneasiness, continued indications on the part of France to disturb the tranquillity of other countries, and to violate, even towards the allies of Britain, the laws of nations, as well as the positive stipulation of treaties. In these circumstances, his majesty had augmented his naval and military force, as the means best calculated to maintain respectability abroad, and tranquillity at home.' The first debates in both houses, chiefly related to the state of the public mind, and to the questioned loyalty of the country; ministers insisting that the conspiracy against the constitution was deep and dangerous, whilst the opposition asserted, that the loyalty of the nation was never, at any period, so fervid, or in greater danger of running from the fear of anarchy, into an opposite extreme, and devoting itself to the support of prerogative, till the balance of the constitution should be lost. Though the language of the crown had been guarded on the subject of war, yet the note of preparation was already struck, and, whether negotiation was sufficient or not to avert impending hostilities, it was evident, that, without negotiation, they must speedily commence. On the 15th of December, Mr. Fox rose, according to previous notice, and moved for an address to his majesty, on the subject of the expected war. 'His object,' he said, 'was simply to declare and record his opinion, that it was the true policy of every

CHAP.
XXVI.

1792.

country, to treat with the existing government of every other nation with which it had relative interests, without regarding the origin or constitution of its ruling powers. If we abhorred the crimes committed in France, we likewise abhorred those committed in Morocco; yet to Morocco we sent a consul, without approving of its government or its crimes. From this motion, no consequence was to be implied, but the opinion he had stated. It would have been better,' he said, 'that this had been done at an earlier period and there were circumstances that made it less proper now, than, at an earlier period. It would have been still better, if the British minister had remained at Paris, as the ministers of other powers had done; but still the earliest effort for peace was the best that remained in our power.' He concluded by moving, 'that his majesty should be solicited to send a minister to Paris, to treat with those persons who exercised, provisionally, the function of the executive government in France, respecting the disputes of his majesty and his allies with the French nation.'

The motion was resisted by ministers, not merely with warmth, but with asperity. Lord Sheffield rose in extreme agitation, and declared, 'that he was almost ashamed of his former enthusiasm for the right honourable mover.' Mr. Burke and Mr. Windham (for the chancellor of the exchequer was absent) took the lead in this debate. In the whole tenor of their speeches, the arguments against opening negotiations were reducible to three points. It was degrading to the dignity of Britain to treat with a monstrous faction who had usurped the government of France and wantonly insulted the law of nations. It was not possible to bind such a faction by treaties, for their avowed principles did not recognize the authority of lawful governments. Nor would a treaty, they affirmed,

be secure with such men, for their power was as unsteady as it was lawless, and their successors might annul to-morrow the contract they had signed to-day.

CHAP.
XXVI.

1792.

On the strength of these arguments, it remains for posterity to decide impartially; but by the event of the present war, posterity will, in all probability, learn, to avoid precipitating into war, without at least attempting negotiation. 'The government of France,' it was said, 'could not negotiate;' yet one of the leading potentates in the war negotiated, while that government was yet existing. 'It would have compromised our dignity.' To this assertion the opposition in vain replied, that negotiation was not petitioning. 'It is asked,' said Mr. Grey, in seconding Mr. Fox's motion, 'if Britain is to sneak and crouch to France?' 'No,' said he, 'neither sneak nor crouch, but negotiate, like a high-spirited nation; and, if redress be refused, then denounce war. We are told,' continued the same speaker, 'that to treat with men stained with so many crimes would be disgraceful; let us fight in the meantime, till the present guilty rulers shall pass away. But what disgrace?' he asked, 'was to be avoided, what honour to be acquired, by fighting first, and negotiating afterwards? Negotiation must some day come; or war is to be eternal. If war, the most dangerous ever undertaken, is to be avoided, we must treat now. Remember that, as war proceeds, and nations grow exasperated, the difficulties of negotiation multiply and obtain strength. If it be difficult to maintain peace with the present governors of France, how much more difficult will it be to re-obtain it when war is begun? 'But we are to fight till France obtains a better government.' Vain and insane object of a war! We are to spurn every means of treating for the blessed tranquillity of

CHAP.
XXVI

1792.

the nation, until the government of France shall choose to become more humane. What do we know of the destinies of France? Can we predict her future governments? Let us maintain our national honour; but let us act with national policy. And where is the tarnish of acting for our own benefit, for our own peace, in treating with the French government as with other governments? The crimes are theirs, and not ours, and will not infect us by the connection of diplomatic dealing. Until we have shewn the people that negociation will not avail, do not let us pretend to tell them, that war is unavoidable.' Mr. Fox's motion was negatived; and another for the same object, introduced by Lord Landsdowne, in the other house, was shortly afterwards withdrawn, during the discussion of the alien bill.

Amid the dreadful vicissitudes of French affairs, and even after the removal of Lord Gower from Paris, Chauvelin, the French ambassador, had been still permitted to remain in England. On the declaration of war between France and the continental powers, his Britannic majesty had proclaimed his intention to maintain inviolable neutrality. No complaint of aggression was heard on the side of France till the 24th of May of the present summer, when Chauvelin remonstrated against the proclamation of our sovereign respecting seditious writings, as containing some expressions which might be understood to insinuate, that France was inimical to the internal prosperity of England. The answer of the British minister sufficiently satisfied Mr. Chauvelin on this subject. Within a few weeks after this correspondence, we find the French minister entreating his Britannic majesty's mediation between the belligerent powers; but the request was formally refused. The return of Lord Gower from Paris took place in the succeeding

August; a measure which his Britannic majesty explained on the grounds of his determination to take no share in the internal politics of France; but which was complained of by France as the declaration of a hostile disposition. Without deciding on the propriety of this recal, it must be observed, that Lord Gower's departure was accompanied with a declaration of the British government respecting Louis, which had at least the hostility of a warning threat. It was declared, 'that if any violence should be offered to the royal family, it would excite the indignation of all Europe.' The influence of this declaration was not the best calculated to save Louis; other means might have been attempted, with better hopes of success: nor was it calculated to preserve peace, had the question of humanity to Louis been set aside.

In the meantime, the executive council of France delegated new powers to Mr. Chauvelin, but those powers were not acknowledged after the 10th of August; nor were his diplomatic letters received by the British minister. The fraternizing decree of the 19th of November was an offensive measure on the side of France, which widened still farther the breach of discord; and as it announced the regardless violence of France, seemed to decide the intentions of the British government, if not to seek, at least not to shun, hostilities.

The refusal of Chauvelin's acknowledgment as a formal ambassador, though it might impair the probabilities of peace, did not totally prevent communications between the two governments. Mr. Maret, a person enjoying the confidence of the

* The acknowledgment of the neutral party after the 10th of August (it was alleged by our government) would have been inconsistent with neutrality, and the virtual acknowledgment of their power.

CHAP.
XXVI

1792.

French minister for foreign affairs, had two interviews with Mr. Pitt; and Chauvelin, waving the ceremony of his recognition, maintained a correspondence with the secretary of state, Lord Grenville, on the mutual complaints of the French and English nations. England chiefly complained of the hostile decree of November, as a proclamation of war with every regular government; and of the opening of the Scheldt by France, as a violation of the rights of her allies. France complained, that the ambassador of the new republic was not acknowledged; that the solemn treaty of commerce between the two countries had been violated by England, in passing the alien bill. 'The decree of November,' said the French plenipotentiary, 'can have no hostile application to England. It is not intended to countenance the seditious of all nations; but only when the general will of a people, clearly and unequivocally expressed, shall call in the French nation to its assistance and fraternity.' 'Sedition,' he added, 'can never be construed into the general will: these two ideas mutually repel each other, since sedition is not, and cannot be, any other than the movement of a small number against the nation at large; and this movement would cease to be seditious, provided all the members of a society should at once rise, either to correct their government, or to change it wholly. The Dutch were not assuredly seditious, when they formed the generous resolution of throwing off the yoke of Spain; and when the general will of the nation called for the assistance of France, it was not reputed a crime in Henry IV, or Elizabeth of England, to have listened to them.' In respect to the free navigation of the Scheldt, he observes, 'that this question is absolutely indifferent to England; that it is of little consequence to Holland; but extremely important to the Belgians. The

émpèròr, to secure the possession of the Low countries,' said Chauvelin, 'sacrificed, without scruple, the most inviolable of rights. Master of those fine provinces, he had ruled them, it was known, with a rod of iron; respected only such of their privileges as it was his interest to preserve, and either destroyed, or perpetually struggled to destroy, the rest. France enters into a war with the house of Austria, expels it from the Low countries, and restores the Belgians to all their rights, which Austria had taken away from them. How can those which they possessed with respect to the Scheldt be excepted, particularly when they are of importance only to those who are deprived of them?' After some negotiation, the English cabinet at length notified, as the conditions of peace, that France should renounce her views of aggrandizement and aggression, *and, relinquishing her conquests, confine herself within her own territories.*

CHAP.
XXVI.

1792.

Such was the state of affairs, when the catastrophe of Louis XVI, which had been for some time anticipated, rendered all attempts at negotiation abortive. On receiving intelligence of this event, Lord Grenville immediately notified to the French ambassador, that his public functions, which were ~~before~~ suspended, having now terminated, his majesty had thought fit to command, that he should quit the kingdom within eight days. The order of council for that purpose was soon after communicated to both houses of parliament; and it was expressly stated, that this extraordinary exertion of the royal prerogative had been used in consequence of the late atrocious act perpetrated at Paris.

1793.

The deep sensation produced by the fate of Louis sufficiently prepared the house for the minister's observations on that event, connected as it

CHAP.
XXVI.

1793.

was, with the expectations of war with France. The minister described the issue of the late negotiation, the infraction of a solemn treaty by the French, and their positive refusal to recede from their injurious aggression on our allies, the Dutch. He concluded by declaring, that, as no satisfaction had been given, either for the opening of the Scheldt, or the fraternizing decree of November, war would probably be unavoidable; and that war was preferable to a peace, which could secure neither our internal tranquillity, nor external safety. He moved, therefore, for an address to his majesty, to promise parliamentary support, in the event of a war. Mr. Fox, after expressing, in the strongest terms, his abhorrence at the murder of Louis, complained, that the various topics introduced by the minister into his speech, had been purposely brought forward to blind the public judgment, and rouse the passions of the house, and were none of them the just grounds of a war. They reduced themselves, he remarked, into three points: the danger of Holland, the decree of the 19th of November, and the general danger of Europe, from the progress of the French arms. With respect to Holland, he said, the conduct of ministers afforded a proof of their disingenuousness. They could not state, that the Dutch had called upon us to fulfil the terms of our alliance: they were obliged to confess, that no such requisition had been made. Whatever were the words of the treaty, we were bound in honour, by virtue of that treaty, to protect the Dutch, if they called on us to do so; but, neither by honour nor treaty, till then. This Mr. Fox by no means construed into giving up the dominion of the Scheldt, on their part; but it pretty clearly shewed, that they were not disposed to make it the cause of a war, unless forced by us to do so. But France, it was said, had

broken faith with the Dutch. Was this,' he asked, 'a cause for precipitately plunging into war? How long was it since we considered a circumstance tending to diminish the good understanding between France and Holland as a misfortune to this country? The plain state of the matter was, that we were bound to save Holland from war, or by war, if called upon; and that, to force the Dutch into war, at so much peril to them, which they saw and dreaded, was not to fulfil, but to abuse, the treaty.'

The decree of the 19th of November Mr. Fox considered as an insult, and the explanation of the the executive council as no adequate satisfaction; but the explanation shewed, that the French were not disposed to insist on that decree, and that they were inclined to peace. Our ministers, however, with unexampled haughtiness, had spoken of the insult, but refused to tell the nature of the satisfaction that would be required.

We had next told the French, that they must withdraw their troops from the Netherlands before we could be satisfied? Was this the neutrality we meant to hold out to France?—If you are invaded and beaten, we will be quiet spectators; but, if you hurt your enemy, if you enter his territory, we declare against you. If the invasion of the Netherlands appeared so alarming, as indeed it might well appear, why,' said Mr. Fox, 'was not an effort used to prevent that coalition against France, which, every man foresaw, would entail this dreadful evil of giving Belgium ultimately to France? The French now said, that they would evacuate the country at the end of the war, when the liberty of the Netherlands should be established. This promise,' he acknowledged, 'was insufficient; but we ought to tell the French what would be deemed sufficient, instead of saying, as we had in-

CHAP.
XXVI.

1793.

definitely said, this is nothing; this is an aggravation; this is insufficient. That war is unjust, which tells not an enemy the ground of provocation and the measure of atonement. It was also impolitic,' he observed, 'as well as unjust, that the people, who must pay for the war, and abide by its consequences, should not be informed on what object they were to fix their hopes for its honourable termination. After five or six years passed in war, the French might agree to evacuate the Netherlands; and was it certain that they would not do so now, if we would condescend to propose it in intelligible terms. The experiment appeared, at least, to be worth a trial. With respect to the danger of French principles in the country, he deprecated that supposition, as the most untenable argument for war. Admitting, for the sake of argument, that the people were disposed to insurrection, the surest way to crush their discontents was to alleviate their burdens; and to preserve the whole force of government, if required for its security, to act against internal enemies; not to waste our energies in such contests as would aggravate the burdens, and multiply the debts, of the public.' The attempt of Mr Fox to give a pacific turn to the address, was negatived by the usual majority.

On the 12th of February, a message from his majesty announced the important intelligence to parliament, that France had declared war against Britain and the states of Holland. Mr. Pitt, in communicating this intelligence, entered into a copious examination of the causes which had led to it.—'When his majesty,' he said, 'had dismissed M. Chauvelin, eight days had been allowed before his departure; and if, during that period, he had sent any satisfactory explanation, it would still have been received. The next event that succeeded, was an embargo laid on all the vessels and

persons of his majesty's subjects who were then in France, contrary to treaty, and the law of nations.

‘ Notwithstanding this outrageous act, such was our disposition to peace, that the channels of communication, even after this period, were not shut. A most singular circumstance happened, which was the arrival of intelligence from his majesty's minister at the Hague, on the very day when the embargo was known in London, that he had received an invitation from General Dumourier to hold an interview, for the purpose of opening a general pacification. Instead of treating the embargo as an act of hostility, our government authorized their minister at the Hague to accede to the general's proposal, and no time was lost in attempting to open the negotiation ; but, before the answer of our government could reach the ambassador, or any means be obtained for carrying the desired object into execution, war was declared on the part of France against this country.’

CHAP.
XXVI.

1793.

Mr. Pitt proceeded to read the declaration of war, and to consider its articles in detail. It stated, that the king of England had, especially since the 10th of August 1792, given proofs of attachment to the coalition against France. On this subject, Mr. Pitt declared, with solemnity, that no such accession to the coalition had taken place on the part of Britain. The next charge in the declaration of war, was the recall of Lord Gower. ‘ After the horrors of August,’ he observed ; ‘ after the suspension of the French monarch, to whom alone our ambassador had been sent, it certainly became proper to recall him. When a government has been overturned, it might be a fair question, how long an interval should intervene till the new powers should be acknowledged ; but if that change was accomplished with tumult and distraction, it became a matter of extreme hardship, that a war

CHAP. should be the consequence to the nation who
XXVI. should refuse to acknowledge its usurpers in the
first instance.' 1

1793.

'Another reason,' said Mr. Pitt, 'offered by the convention for their declaration of war is, that the ambassador of the French republic has not been accredited by our government: but let it be remembered, that the letters of credence which Chauvelin preferred, were not refused till after repeated offences had been offered, for which no compensation had been made; and that, at that moment, the French were embarked in the trial of their king, which has since terminated so atrociously. Was it the moment to acknowledge them, when their usurpation was announced only by its enormities? Our court is further blamed, in the same declaration, for prohibiting the purchase of corn, of arms, and of other commodities, by citizens or agents of the French republic; for prohibiting the exportation of grain to France, while it was allowed to other countries, contrary to the treaty of 1786; for prohibiting the circulation of assignats; and for directing the severities of the *alien* bill against the republicans of France, while the British government cherishes and welcomes the rebels and the royalists, who have fought against France. Thus we are blamed,' said Mr. Pitt, 'for having withheld the means and sustenance of war from France, at a moment when she was meditating, and even declaring, hostilities against Holland, for debarring the agents of treason and sedition, and giving alms and hospitality to the unfortunate; for prohibiting the influx of assignats, and shielding ourselves from a gigantic system of swindling.'

'But the armament which this country equipped is another foundation of complaint. Under what circumstances, however, was this armament

raised? At the period when France, by her conduct respecting the Scheldt, betrayed her intention to conquer, in contempt of all treaties. True, we armed in self-defence, and in defence of our allies. We meant to protect Holland; but their accusation is false, when it farther states, that our intention in sending ships to the Scheldt, was to disturb their operations in Belgium. Another ground of resentment expressed by France, is the grief of our Court at the fate of their unhappy monarch. Thus it appears, that they make war upon us, first, because we love our constitution; next, because we detest their proceedings; and, lastly, because we presumed to grieve at the death of their murdered king. This is tyranny over our hearts, as well as our political proceedings; and were their tyranny made good, we might ask them, in the words of the Roman writer, ‘*Quis gemitus populo Romano liber erit?*’ Of all their apologies for declaring war, two specific grounds are alone mentioned, which deserve a serious refutation: the first is, his majesty’s accession to the treaty of Pilnitz, which is a false assertion; the next is our armament, which was purely in self-defence, and for the just protection of allies, whom the most solemn treaty bound us to protect.’ Mr. Pitt concluded by moving an address, conformable to his majesty’s message.

The address, in its present shape, was opposed by Mr. Fox, on the ground of pledging the house to an indefinite sanction of the past, as well as of the future, measures of the ministry. The causes of war alleged by France, Mr. Fox did not purpose indiscriminately to defend. It was the custom of France, even under her former government, to crowd into a manifesto every possible complaint, as a cause of hostility, which could be imagined,

CHAP.
XXVI.

1793.

good, bad, or indifferent; but the ordering Mr. Chauvelin to quit the kingdom, and prohibiting the exportation of corn to France, when exportation was permitted to other countries, appeared to him to be acts of hostility on our part, which did not warrant us to say, that the war was purely aggression on the side of France. He severely censured the conduct of ministers in refusing to send an ambassador to France. Had we sent an ambassador, and had our conduct been more candid and conciliating, the issue of that fatal trial might have been altered. ‘But we negotiated (says the minister) unofficially.’ What wise purpose this distinction between official and unofficial negotiation could serve, Mr. Fox professed he never could perceive. ‘But, granting that we had negotiated unofficially, had we really and conscientiously negotiated with a wish for peace? No; we remonstrated against accessions of territory, and we complained of an attack on the rights of our ally; but we proposed nothing that could be admitted as satisfaction for the injury complained of; we pointed out nothing that could remove the alarm. Lord Grenville said something about withdrawing their troops from the Austrian Netherlands; but if by that was understood a requisition to withdraw their troops unconditionally, while they were at war with the emperor, such a proposal was an insult, and not a proffer of peace.’ Mr. Fox then proposed, as an amendment to the address, that it should conclude with a promise of supporting the throne against every hostile attempt of France, and in such other exertions as might be necessary to induce France to consent to such terms of pacification, as might be consistent with the honour of his majesty’s crown, the interests of his people, and the security of his allies. The

rejection of Mr. Fox's amendment, on this occasion, did not deter Mr. Grey^a from moving, soon after, for a similar address, which contains the en-

CHAP.
XXVI.

1793.

^a Words of Mr. Grey's motion on the 21st of February 1793, for addressing his majesty respecting the war.—

‘That an humble address be presented to his majesty, to assure his majesty, that his faithful commons, animated by a sincere and dutiful attachment to his person and family, and to the excellent constitution of this kingdom, as well as by an ardent zeal for the interest and honour of the nation, will at all times be ready to support his majesty in any measures which a due observance of the faith of treaties, the dignity of his crown, or the security of his dominions, may compel him to undertake: That, feeling the most earnest solicitude to avert from our country the calamities of war, by every means consistent with honour and with safety, we expressed to his majesty, at the opening of the present session, our sense of the temper and prudence which had induced his majesty to observe a strict neutrality with respect to the war on the continent, and uniformly to abstain from any interference in the internal affairs of France, and our hopes, that the steps which his majesty had taken would have the happy tendency to render a firm and temperate conduct effectual for preserving the blessings of peace: That, with the deepest concern, we now find ourselves obliged to relinquish that hope, without any evidence having been produced to satisfy us, that his majesty's ministers have made such efforts as it was their duty to make, and as, by his majesty's gracious speech, we were taught to expect, for the preservation of peace. It is no less the resolution than the duty of his majesty's faithful commons, to second his efforts in the war thus fatally commenced, so

long as it shall continue; but we deem it a duty equally incumbent upon us to solicit his majesty's attention to those reasons or pretext, by which his servants have laboured to justify a conduct on their part, which we cannot but consider as having contributed, in a great measure, to produce the present rupture.’

Various grounds of hostility against France have been stated, but none, that appeared to us to have constituted such an urgent and imperious case of necessity, as left no room for accommodation, and made war unavoidable. The government of France has been accused of having violated the law of nations, and the stipulations of existing treaties, by an attempt to deprive the republic of the United states of the exclusive navigation of the Scheldt. No evidence has, however, been offered, to convince us that this exclusive navigation was, either in itself, or in the estimation of those who were alone interested in preserving it, of such importance as to justify a determination in our government to break with France on that account. If, in fact, the states-general had shewn a determination to defend their right by force of arms, it might have been an instance of the truest friendship to have suggested to them, for their serious consideration, how far the assertion of this unprofitable claim might, in the present circumstances of Europe, tend to bring into hazard the essential interests of the republic. But when, on the contrary, it has been acknowledged, that no requisition on this subject was made to his majesty on the part of the states-general, we are at a loss to comprehend, on what grounds of right or propriety we take the lead in asserting a claim, in which we are not

CHAP.
XXVI.

1793.

ture political creed of his party on the subject of the war, but which was rejected, without a division.

not principals, and in which the principal party has, as far as we know, thought it prudent or necessary to call for our interposition.

We must farther remark, that the point in dispute seems to have been relieved from a considerable part of its difficulty by the declaration of the minister of foreign affairs, that the French nation gave up all pretensions to determine the question of the future navigation of the Scheldt. Whether the terms of this declaration were perfectly satisfactory or not, they at least left the question open to pacific negotiation, in which the intrinsic value of the object to any of the parties concerned in it, might have been coolly and impartially weighed against the consequences to which all of them might be exposed, by attempting to maintain it by force of arms.

We have been called upon to resist views of conquest and aggrandizement entertained by the government of France, at all times dangerous to the general interests of Europe, but asserted to be more peculiarly so now, when connected with the propagation of principles, which lead to the violation of the most sacred duties, and are utterly subversive of the peace and order of all civilized society. We admit, that it is the interest and duty of every member of the commonwealth of Europe to support the established system and distribution of power among the independent sovereignties, which actually subsist, and to prevent the aggrandizement of any state, especially the most powerful, at the expense of any other; and for the honour of his majesty's crown, we do most earnestly wish that his ministers had manifested a just sense of the importance of the principle to which they now appeal, in the course of

late events, which seemed to threaten its entire destruction. When Poland was beginning to recover from the long calamities of anarchy, combined with oppression; after she had established an hereditary and limited monarchy, like our own; and was peaceably employed in settling her internal government: his majesty's ministers, with apparent indifference and unconcern, have seen her become the victim of the most unprovoked and unprincipled invasion, her territory overrun, her free constitution subverted, her national independence annihilated, and the general principles of the security of nations wounded through her side. With all these evils was France soon after threatened; with the same appearance either of supine indifference, or of secret approbation, his majesty's ministers beheld the armies of other powers, in evident concert with the oppressor of Poland, advancing to the invasion and subjugation of France; and the march of those armies distinguished from the ordinary hostilities of civilized nations, by manifestoes, which, if their principles and menaces had been carried into practice, must have inevitably produced the return of that ferocity and barbarism in war, which a beneficent religion and enlightened manners, and true military honour, have for a long time banished from the Christian world.

No effort appears to have been made to check the progress of these invading armies. His majesty's ministers, under a pretended respect for the rights and independence of other sovereigns, thought fit, at that time, to refuse even the interposition of his majesty's councils and good offices to save so great and important a portion of Europe from falling under the dominion of a foreign power. But now con-

Such was the business which chiefly occupied parliament before the commencement of war; but

CHAP.
XXVI.

1792.

er, by an ever-memorable reverse of fortune, had France repulsed her invaders, and carried her arms into their territory, than his majesty's ministers, laying aside that collusive indifference which had marked their conduct during the invasion of France, began to express alarms for the general security of Europe, which, as it appears to us, they ought to have seriously felt, and might have expressed, with great justice, on the previous successes of her powerful adversaries.

We will not dissemble our opinion, that the decree of the national convention of France of the 19th November 1792, was, in a great measure, liable to the objections urged against it; but we cannot admit, that a war, on the single ground of such a decree, unaccompanied by any overt-acts, by which we, or our allies, might be directly attacked, would be justified as necessary and unavoidable: certainly not, unless upon a regular demand made by his majesty's ministers, of explanation and security in behalf of us and our allies, the French had refused to give his majesty such explanation and security. No such demand was made; explanations, it is true, have been received and rejected; but it well deserves to be remarked and remembered, that these explanations were voluntarily offered on the part of France, not previously demanded on ours, as they would have been, if it had suited the views of his majesty's ministers to have acted frankly and honourably towards France, and not to have reserved their complaints to a future period, when explanations, however reasonable, might come too late, and hostilities might be unavoidable. After a review of all these considerations, we think it necessary to represent to his majesty, that none of the points which were

in dispute between his ministers and the government of France, appear to us to have been incapable of being adjusted by negotiation, except that aggravation of French ambition which has been stated to arise from the political opinions of the French nation. These, indeed, we conceive, formed neither any definable object of negotiation, nor any intelligible reason for hostility. They were equally incapable of being adjusted by treaty, or being either refuted or confirmed by the events of war.

We need not state to his majesty's wisdom, that force can never cure delusion; and we know his majesty's goodness too well, to suppose that he could ever entertain the idea of employing force to destroy opinions, by the extirpation of those who held them. The grounds upon which his majesty's ministers have advised him to refuse the renewal of some avowed public intercourse with the existing government of France, appeared to us neither justified by the reason of the thing itself, nor by the usage of nations, nor by any expediency arising from the present state of circumstances. In all negotiations or discussions, of which peace is the real object, the appearance of an amicable disposition, and of a readiness to offer and accept of pacific explanations on both sides, is as necessary and useful to insure success, as any arguments founded on strict right. Nor can it be denied, that claims or arguments of any kind, urged in hostile and haughty language, however equitable or valid in themselves, are more likely to provoke, than to conciliate the opposite party. Deploring, as we have ever done, the melancholy event which has lately happened in France, it would yet be some consolation to us to have heard, that the powerful interposition of the British nation, had

CHAP.
XXVI.

1792.

of domestic proceedings it may be proper to interrupt the direct narrative, while we view those contemporary events in France, which tended so much to accelerate the mutual hostility of the two nations.

On the 21st of September 1792, the national convention was assembled, and those members of the legislative assembly, who had not obtained the dangerous honour of being re-elected, fled from Paris, to seek an asylum from assassins. The new representatives, in contemplating their meeting, read their mutual enmities in every opposite countenance. The proscriber was opposed to the proscribed, the jacobin to the Girondist, with hat-

had at least been offered, although it should unfortunately have been rejected. But, instead of receiving such consolation from the conduct of his majesty's ministers, we have seen them, with extreme astonishment, employing as an incentive to hostilities, an event which they had made no effort to avert by negotiation. This inaction they could only excuse on the principle, that the internal conduct of nations, whatever may be our opinion of its morality, was no proper ground for interposition and remonstrance from foreign states; a principle from which it must still more clearly follow, that such internal conduct could never be an admissible, justifiable reason for war.

We cannot refrain from observing, that such frequent illusions, as have been made to an event, confessedly no ground of rupture, seemed to us to have arisen from a sinister intention, to derive, from the humanity of Englishmen, popularity for measures, which their deliberate judgment would have reprobated, and to influence the most virtuous sensibilities of his majesty's people, into a blind and furious zeal for a war of vengeance. His majesty's faithful commons, therefore, though always determin-

ed to support his majesty with vigour and cordiality, in the exertions necessary for the defence of his kingdoms, yet feel that they are equally bound by their duty to his majesty, to declare, in the most solemn manner, their disapprobation of the conduct of his majesty's ministers, throughout the whole of these transactions; a conduct which, in their opinion, could lead to no other termination, but that to which it seems to have been studiously directed, of plunging the country into an unnecessary war. The calamities of such a war must be aggravated, in the estimation of every thinking mind, by reflecting on the peculiar advantages of that fortunate situation which we have so unwisely abandoned, and which not only exempted us from sharing in the distresses and afflictions of the other nations of Europe, but converted them into sources of benefit, improvement, and prosperity, in this country.

We, therefore, humbly implore his majesty's paternal goodness, to listen no longer to the councils which have forced us into this unhappy war, but to embrace the earliest occasion, which his wisdom may discern, of restoring to his people, the blessings of peace.

reds perfectly matured, that only waited the signal to engage. On one side of the hall was seen the ~~un~~terrible countenance of Danton, whose looks seemed still to record the massacres of September; beside him was Robespierre, his figure expressing a cruelty more profound, and more insatiable; every thing was composed and humble in his deportment; but his smile was frightful, even when it was turned upon his friends; yet on him the men and women of the galleries kept their eyes, as upon an idol. Near this monster was seen a being, hideous and deformed, who affected to appear the equal of Danton and Robespierre, but was in fact only their despised tool and accomplice—this was Marat. Among the many similars in atrocity, who crowded the same side, Billaud de Varennes, and Collot de Herbois, were particularly distinguished. The one seemed to have studied his crimes in the depth of the cloister, the other to have imbibed them in the orgies of the theatre. The names of all their formidable followers, were not yet known. Some of them had a look of stupid ferocity, which promised every thing to those who should employ them; others displayed that delirium of fanaticism, which burns for employment.

Gaudet, Brissot, Vergniaud, and all their friends, eager to separate from such associates, retired to those benches, which their first adversaries had lately possessed. All the favour of the convention seemed, at first, to turn towards them, and to pay respect to their superior talents; an homage which they received with all the self-complacency which was the weakness of their character; but the era we approach becomes too dark to let us dwell even on the faults, much less the foibles, of those inefficient men. They now stood as the adversaries of jacobinism, and, whatever they had been before, it is impossible, at this latter period, to withhold from

CHAP.
XXVI.

1792.

them our pity and respect. Not, indeed, because they fought for themselves against the jacobins, those demons whom they had conjured up, without the power of appeasing. But we pity them now, because their battle was in defence of, and in the general cause of humanity. Pétion was, by their influence, appointed president of the convention. Humbled, indeed, was the cause of humanity, when her most devoted champions were represented by Pétion.

The establishment of their republic had been a favourite vision of the Girondists; but what was their rage and disappointment, when, at the opening of the convention, the pleasure of announcing its birth-day was snatched from them by the Septemberizer Collot d'Herbois, who anticipated their design, and moved for the abolition of royalty. Mortified as they were at this circumstance, they could not now, in consistency, retract their opinions: there was no dissenting voice; and the hall of the assembly resounded with acclamations of '*Long live the republic!*' Nothing but such a circumstance could have prevented the first debate of the convention from breaking out into animosity. The Girondists, hoping to confound their adversaries by the briskness of their attacks, introduced, at the very next sitting, every subject which could recal the guilt and contumely of the jacobins; they reproached them with the dreadful agitations which, by their influence still prevailed over France. 'You have decreed a republic,' said Lasource; but the infant cradle of your republic floats in blood. You have destroyed thrones, and you make war for liberty; but the axes of a dictatorship and a triumvirate are preparing to be lifted over us, which will exceed, in tyranny, all that history records.' At these words, there was a cry of 'Name the dictator; name the triumvirate.'

Danton, Robespierre, and Marat, were severally named. Danton rose first, and defended himself from the charge, with all the direct boldness which distinguished his speeches. Robespierre spoke next; but he fell, in this defence, so much beneath the accustomed dull mediocrity of his powers, that he tired the assembly, and, for once in his life, excited only their contempt. Unfortunate it was that he did so. The Girondists, contented with seeing him excite so much derision, forgot their danger, and forbore to push the victory while it was in their hands. Marat, without disavowing that he had conceived the plan of giving a dictator to the republic, uttered such wishes for bloodshed and proscription, that Vergniaud and other deputies rose at last, and pulled him by force from the tribune. Vergniaud took his place; but, forgetting Robespierre and Danton, he only pursued Marat. He read the dreadful *circulaire*, which had been sent on the eve of the September massacres, as a signal for all France to imitate those of Paris. He read a number from the journal of Marat, called *L'Ami de peuple*, in which that savage had coolly calculated the number of heads which must be cut off, for establishing the republic, at 70,000. At this passage the galleries raised a horrid shout of applause, which disconcerted the Girondists. Many of them abandoned the hall, in disgust at that barbarity, which it was their duty to have remained and punished. Some that remained, affecting to treat the conduct of Marat more as eccentricity than sincere atrocity, proposed to leave off individual prosecution, and vote the republic one and indivisible. This single debate stamped the future character of the convention; the Girondists were superior in numbers, but unequal in ferocity, and therefore in strength, to the mount-

CHAP.
XXVI.

1792.

In the midst of their early and inauspicious sittings, the convention received intelligence of those first victories which attended the French army, of the retreat of the Prussians, of the conquest of Savoy and the county of Nice, and the rapid march of Custine into the Palatinate. The work, which had been begun for the defence of Paris were laid aside. These successes increased the insolence of the jacobins; but they laid, at the same time, some restriction on their cruelties, and forced them to be more circumspect even in their threats. The assembly possessed resources, which might have overwhelmed them. Scarce a tenth part of the members durst avow their attachment to the mountain; but this audacious minority expected to operate by terror, or by jealousy, on the whole mass, with the aid of that monstrous science, which has been called revolutionary tactics. It consisted in a profound knowledge of all the vices and extravagancies which are incident to assemblies of men.

Near the place of the convention, the rendezvous of the jacobins was held; an assembly which made the convention itself but a scene of secondary importance, and deliberated, or rather declaimed, by the light of a few lamps, which dimly lighted up the vaults of their monastic hall. Its attendants were obliged to present themselves in a sordid dress; and the meanest and most brutal, who came there, never went away without adding to the rudeness of their speech and the ferocity of their manners. The society counted, in Paris alone, above 1,500 members. A multitude of obscure accomplices filled its galleries. The sitting was opened with revolutionary songs, some of them slow and mournful, like the warnings of death; others in a gay strain, that were still more hideous. The correspondence of their affiliated societies, which extended over all the towns and villages of

France, was then read; some of them congratulating the parent-society; others reproaching its weakness. In these dreadful communications was contained the list and the *éloge* of all the massacres committed in every corner of the republic. After this reading, commenced their debates, at once burlesque and horrible. Their deputies in the convention came there to report the checks they had experienced, or the hopes they entertained of enjoying vengeance over their enemies. Such madness and confusion reigned in those debates, that one expected to see them concluded without any resolution. But the conception of no crime was ever lost in that scene: scarce had the atrocity been suggested, when it was applauded, and put in train. The force of the faction consisted chiefly in employing men, who, by their grossness, their stupidity, and debasement, were the outcasts of other parties; they had the vices of every individual in France at their controul. They had fanatics among them; but the greater part of their chiefs were the hypocrites of fanaticism: the former were greedy of blood; the others of gold. Both openly insulted compassion, as the meanest debasement of the heart: some of them, however, felt it in secret, and exercised it by stealth.

To the Girondine party the convocation of the convention had added some new and respectable members, among whom were many who followed their fortunes in the present assembly, without approving of their conduct in the last. The imprudence of this party cost them the alienation of many members; but, above all, the error of their disdaining the alliance of several new deputies, who had eagerly solicited their alliance, occasioned an irreparable loss to their strength. Barrere, either because his vanity was wounded by this rejection, or because he was warned by his fears, esta-

CHAP.
XXVI.

1792.

published a secession; one of those mixed parties, where the vulgar of all assemblies resort for safety at the approach of great political storm bend under all menaces, while they appear to dictate all laws; who destroy every thing by force of modifications, and only retard the designs of guilt, to render them more mature.

On the eve of this combat between the two parties, which was to decide the destiny of France, their voices were unanimous in one severe decree which respected the emigrants. The public finances were drained, and the estates of that devoted description of men afforded a prospect of resource, too great to be resisted. By a sweeping and guilty ordination, in which the emigrant was neither described nor defined, the misery of millions was sanctioned, every boundary between guilt and innocence, every distinction between the voluntary enemy of his country and the unfortunate exile, whom fear or necessity had driven from his home, was left to the justice of interested tribunals, to the clemency of the reign of terror. It is but justice to the name of Frenchmen to say, that some opposition was made to the decree; and as if the times had been fraught with all the incoherence, as well as all the rage, of insanity, the name of Tallien, whose defence of the September massacres has just been mentioned, is attached to the most eloquent protest which was heard against this measure of barbarity.

But the Girondists, if they connived at tyranny, had not lost sight of that tyrant, to whom their hatred is their chief praise. Robespierre was formally denounced in the convention. Louvet, one of their new associates, an ardent and impetuous speaker, disclosed such a picture of the crimes of that demagogue, that every feeling of freedom and humanity seemed to rise in the hearts

of the assembly, and call for his immediate punishment. The very galleries were silenced, and durst not support their idol. Human nature seemed on the point of deliverance from its opprobrium: every thing was on the side of the accusers; numbers and enthusiasm. That hour Robespierre might have been led to the scaffold; but the convention gave him a delay. The rights of the accused, which they had violated towards innocence, were religiously kept towards Robespierre; and at the end of eight days, their culprit returned, rather to a triumph than a trial. Barrere, the abominable temporizer, concealing his fears under neutrality, besought the assembly to turn their zeal on a worthier object than Robespierre, whose consequence he affected to despise. The zeal which Louvet had inspired was too virtuous to last long in the hearts of such an audience. The vengeance of outraged humanity was deferred, till every crime and every grief that blackens history had been the forfeit to France of this day's acquittal. But between these two moments, what a period of blood intervenes! Could the extreme era of moral debasement be pitched upon in modern history, it would certainly be the duration of this eclipse of reason and humanity in France. In justice to the Girondists, we ought to separate their merits, as well as genius, from the common obloquy of the convention: attached in reality to their party, but too cowardly to avow it, were the contemptible majority of that assembly. The jacobins were, however, the habitual speakers of the convention; but, in their speeches, there was as little eloquence as morality. They had a style, it is true, which aimed at extraordinary force and gigantic expressions; but their taste was, if possible, as horrible as their dispositions. Frenzy and extravagance were substituted for inspiration; and, from the poverty of their conceptions, their

CHAP.
XXVI.

1792.

routine of metaphors was hacknied and unvaried. Should history deign to preserve the archives of their debates, they will be found to contain every thing that can be called the *bathos* in bad taste, as well as in moral feeling.

The king of Prussia had retreated: the king of Sardinia was, by this period, despoiled of the half of his estates. Nothing could be more rapid than the expedition directed against Savoy. It had been confided to General Montesquieu, a man of spirit and talent, formerly powerful at court, and attached to the brother of the king; but latterly attached to the revolution, to which he had made abundant sacrifices. Since the 10th of August, he had interceded with the Girondists for the king, who were yet masters of his fate. Of this the jacobins suspected him, and he had no refuge but in his military employment. The king of Sardinia, a prodigal and careless prince, had seen without alarm, or at least without precaution, the assembling of a French army round Savoy. Every thing exposed him to the wrath of the new republic. He had not been able to refuse an asylum to the fugitive princes, his own relations; nor was it doubted that he had acceded to the league of kings: yet Savoy was guarded by only a handful of Piedmontese, who to the want of discipline joined the most notorious cowardice. Montesquieu, in entering Savoy, had no difficulty but to find his enemies, who abandoned their forts, once memorable for their obstinate sieges, as soon as they heard the sound of his guns. Their artillery, their magazines, every thing, was given up to the victor, who, in three days, arrived at Chamberry. Europe could not conceive what had become of that spirit of Piedmontese bravery, which acquired so much renown at the commencement of the present age. General Anselmi entered Nice with the same faci-

lity; and the convention made as much dispatch to take definitive possession of these provinces as their Generals had made to obtain them. They were united to France, under the name of the departments of Mont Blanc and the Maritime Alps. The news of Montesquieu's victories came very opportunely, a decree of accusation having passed against him the day before, which the first movement of their joy induced the tyrants to revoke.

The occupation of Savoy seemed to guide the wishes of France towards the conquest of Italy: but at present the means of such a conquest were wholly wanting; and the executive turned upon the lesser object, of Geneva. The complaints alleged by France against this little republic were such as great states generally bring against a small and defenceless neighbour. At the hazard, therefore, of irritating the warlike cantons of Switzerland, among whom the news of the 10th of August had already excited a sense of dangerous indignation, they dispatched General Montesquieu on this expedition. The general received this mandate with sincere affliction; and, far from abusing his power over the fate of Geneva, only made use of it to soften her hardships. He entered into negotiation with the Genevese; he made a value of their submission to the French government: he saved Geneva from many evils, and he saved his country from a baneful war; but drew down fresh resentments on his head. A new decree of accusation was launched at him by the convention; and he would have perished on the scaffold, had not the gratitude of the republic, whom he had saved, afforded him the means of escape.

But the successes of the south were inconsiderable, compared to those by which Custine struck terror into Germany.

From the moment that the king of Prussia made

CHAP.
XXVI.

1792.

known the point where he intended to force his passage into France, the generals Luckner and La Fayette had been anxious to effect a diversion by the army of the Rhine. Dumourier took a lively interest in this project. Every event had contributed to facilitate its execution: the king of Prussia had struck directly into the interior of France; he was therefore in no situation to watch, from the plains of St. Menehoud, what passed upon the Rhine; and he had left only some regiments of Hessians to protect the Palatinate. Custine, with 15,000 men, detached from the army of the Rhine, put those troops to the rout, and entered Spire. Worms and Oppenheim opened their gates to the victor, and the Hessians precipitately dispersed, leaving the Palatinate to his possession. Custine continued to advance; and, on the 19th of October, brought his army before the walls of Mentz, which surrendered at the first summons. From this important conquest he had a *point d'appui* for all his excursions; but nothing, at present, appeared to impede his progress. The opulent city of Frankford was before him, and without defence: he entered it; and here terminated his brilliant career.

However signal the successes of Custine, Dumourier even eclipsed them; he shewed himself still more dexterous in appropriating the favours of fortune, and had the glory of saving France from at least external humiliation. Kellerman, it is true, had fought and conquered; but it was Dumourier, who, with the aid of his good fortune, had reduced the king of Prussia to a desperate situation, by the event of one day's cannonade. His conduct, it must be owned, in respecting the retreat of Frederic, gave birth to suspicions, as well as ridicule, but such management shewed the policy of a negociator. Verdun and Longwy had surrendered, without resistance, to the French

arms, by shameful capitulations, which formed too striking a contrast with the manifesto of the duke of Brunswick. The siege of Thionville was raised, after a glorious defence made by Felix Wimpfen; the emigrants had here sustained the heaviest loss and disgrace, chiefly because the king of Prussia had not thought artillery necessary for a siege. Lisle was attacked by the Austrians, if not with the surest means of annoyance, at least with the most barbarous. Dumourier had had the salutary boldness to trust those places of Flanders to their own resources, so that the labours of Vauban constituted their only defence. Formerly La Fayette had entertained the same idea: he had ordered Dumourier, who was then under his orders, to raise the camp at Maulde, but Dumourier, wishing to ruin his superior, disobeyed him. When Fayette was no longer to be feared, he yielded to this necessity, and hence was his hardy and rapid march, which brought him to the passes of Arragonne, before the duke of Brunswick could reach them. But the few troops which Dumourier left in Flanders, could not now cope with the Austrians. The duke of Saxe-Teschen penetrated through this frontier, though it was bristled with fortresses, laid waste the villages with impunity, and, at length, learning with what success the king of Prussia had bombarded Longwy and Verdun, he hoped to produce the same effect on Lisle. Lisle was invested by 17,000 men, the garrison refused to surrender, and the bombardment commenced. The Austrians, with a barbarous tranquillity, continued for twenty days to employ this means of destruction, which the military art disdains, when it does not produce at first the effect of intimidation. Had the inhabitants been disposed to favour the Austrians, and to save their property from destruction, there were not troops enough in the town to have

CHAP.
XXVI.

1792.

restrained their disposition; but indignation supplied them with courage: the long conflagration which they witnessed, could not extort a word of submission. The arch-duchess Christina, governess of the Low countries, was present at this siege, and, it is said, directed herself the preparations of the bombardment. The names of tigress and fury were lavished on her, by the popular hatred of the besieged, at the same moment, when they were applied to her unfortunate sister, the captive queen, by the Parisians. At length the Austrians abandoned those useless efforts; the retreat of the king of Prussia constrained them to retire into a perilous and defensive situation.

Such were the successes of a campaign which had been opened scarcely three months, when Dumourier returned to Paris. Scarcely had he announced the first retrograde steps of the king of Prussia, when he declared, that, before the end of two months, he should be at Brussels. The conquest of Belgium had ever been the favourite object of his ambition; he now came to urge its preparatory measures. It was curious too to observe with what eye the people should regard him, at a time, when every circumstance announced him as their deliverer. But hatred and jealousy had tainted all the sources of public joy. The trophies obtained over their invaders, were less in men's minds, than the horrid images of the 2^d of September. The people shewed no eagerness to see him. At the opera alone, they seemed to imitate some acclamations, which it had been customary to lavish on great commanders; but the enthusiasm had a painful air, and only served to irritate the jacobins.

However eager the jacobins might be to imitate the ingratitude of ancient republicans, policy invited them to resist this propensity, and as they

did not despair of attaching Dumourier to their faction, they besought it, but with a cool and menacing air, as if they had offered him their alternative, '*the scaffold or our alliance.*'

Dumourier affected, as much as he could, a perfect neutrality between the two parties: he kept up a correspondence with both: he appeared at one of the fetes of the jacobin faction, where he spoke with sufficient modesty, but promised them the conquest of the Belgians. Collot D'Herbois harangued him in an address, sometimes flattering, and sometimes menacing, which concluded by one of those ridiculous affectations of republican simplicity, which completed the burlesque exhibitions of the jacobin meetings. Collot D'Herbois promised to the conqueror a kiss of his wife. Dumourier retired from this scene sufficiently humiliated; he saw the necessity, however, of attaching some of these ferocious leaders to his interests, and judiciously plied the venal spirits of Danton and Lacroix with prospects of acquisition in Belgium, which allured their cupidity.

Although he departed more impressed with the necessity, than furnished with the means, of conquest, yet the promptitude of his troops to learn the military art, and the activity of his own preparations, enabled him to commence the attack of Mons, before the corps of Austrians, under Clairfait, could arrive to its succour. The duke of Saxe Teschen commanded the army destined to cover it; he received a few reinforcements, among which were some regiments of emigrants. This prince, little fitted for great undertakings, always undecided and embarrassed, extinguished the ardour of his troops by his incessant precautions. He confined his efforts to the fortifying of Jemappe for the protection of the city of Mons. Dumourier, of all things, desired to attack this position, before

CHAP.
XXVI.

1792.

Clairfait, who was hastening by forced marches, could arrive to join the allies; but, before this could be done, it was necessary to chase the Austrians from those heights which they possessed in front of Jemappe, and, above all, from a wood, the borders of which extended from Sar, as far as Bossu. He had also to effect a junction with General D'Harville, who advanced to aid him with 6,000 men. To fulfil the first of these objects, he had some actions with the Austrians from the 3^d to the 5th of November, in which he took 900 prisoners, and lost about 500 men. It was during these combats of lesser importance, that General Boileau, the lieutenant of Saxe Teschen, an officer infinitely more expert, more fertile in expedients, and more daring, than his commander in chief, alarmed at seeing the French thus acting on the offensive, proposed to the duc de Saxe Teschen, to attack them in the night. An action in the dark, he imagined, would take away from the French, their most formidable advantage, which was the excellence of their artillery. The Austrians have often regretted that this advice had not been followed; it is known, however, that afterwards General Boileau attempted a similar surprise in Italy, against Bonaparte, and that he had reason to repent it.

Intrrenched on the heights of Jemappe, in a situation which they believed impregnable, the Austrians waited for the powerful reinforcement of General Clairfait. Their army was from 20 to 22,000 strong; their right wing, supported by the village of Jemappe, formed a square; their front and left, which were supported by Valenciennes, were placed upon a woody mountain, where three stages of redoubts rose above each other in an amphitheatre, furnished with 100 pieces of cannon. The French could oppose an equal

fire, but in a position much more unfavourable. Dumourier makes their number amount to 30,000 men. At even in the morning, a most furious cannonade commenced, which lasted till ten. The soldiers of Dumourier, we are told by French historians of the battle, called out to be led to closer quarters with the bayonet; according to other accounts, they were kept to the charge by a plentiful array of cannon, which was planted behind them. Their courage, whether forced or spontaneous, became irresistible: they first carried the village of Quareignon, which protected Jemappe on one side. At noon every thing was disposed for a general attack; it was entrusted chiefly to Bournonville, whom Dumourier called the Ajax of Frenchmen, and to the eldest son of the duke of Orleans. The first stage of redoubts was carried with the greatest activity, but the dangers thickened as they advanced, particularly to the centre of the French, as the Austrian cavalry prepared to enter the plain, and charge their columns in flank. The rallying of those exposed columns was ascribed to the young Orleans, who led them on to the second stage of redoubts. His attack was favoured by a body of hussars and chasseurs, who arrived in time to charge the enemy's cavalry, and keep them in check. At that instant Dumourier presented himself on the right, where he found, after a full success on the part of Bournonville, who had turned and carried the redoubts, some disorder in his cavalry, which had occurred, whilst he was employed at the head of his infantry. Dumourier rallied, and charged the Austrian cavalry with the greatest vigour, at the moment when it threatened to gain upon his right flank. In the interval of this combat of the right, his left wing had carried Jemappe, and his centre the second tier of redoubts. Another combat was still to be maintain-

CHAP. ed on the heights, but this last one was neither
 XXVI. long nor obstinate; for the Austrians retired in
 1792. disorder, and crossed in haste through the city of
 November. Mons. Their retreat was, nevertheless, effected
 with little confusion, for they lost but a few pieces
 of artillery.

The conquest of all Belgium was the fruit of this engagement to Dumourier. It is not precisely known how much blood it cost. Dumourier, whose description of the battle has been the standard of almost every subsequent account of it, estimates the loss of the Austrians at 4000, and his own at 900. Such a disproportion, in an action where the French were the assailants, with every disadvantage, impairs the credibility of other circumstances in the battle, which the Frenchman has related. That it was fatal to the Austrians, is too evident by its instantaneous effects; but if two stages of redoubts were thus carried, we cannot but be astonished to hear the French themselves acknowledge, that their enemy lost but a few pieces of artillery.

The Austrian army could not recover its confidence, even after the tardy arrival of 12 or 16,000 men, brought up by Clairfait. It was the same army which had repressed the religious sedition in Brabant. The Flemish priests, though they could have well wished for other deliverers than the French, celebrated their welcome with peals of bells, and sung *te Deum* for their victory. The convention received the tidings of Jemappe with an enthusiasm of joy. The grand advantage of possessing Belgium, was the fund of wealth which the possessions of the clergy afforded. On the 15th of December, was passed the famous decree, which united the Belgic provinces to the French departments. This was a thunder-stroke to Dumourier. The views of that commander were

too enlightened, and his character too averse to violence, not to see the policy of protecting those conquests, and using them with moderation. Perhaps too, as is generally supposed, his private and personal ambition coincided with the suggestions of his wisdom. Every thing excluded him from the hopes of power in his own country; scarce, indeed, could he flatter himself with the assurance of a safe return. It would have gratified him, therefore, to have exercised a kind of protectorship over the Belgians, could they have remained under their ancient theocratical influence. The decree of the 15th of December ravished from him every prospect of this power, and this retreat. His vexation broke out—he began to speak contemptuously of the convention, and to threaten them with the vengeance of an enraged commander. On their part, they defied his menaces, and lost no time in teaching him, that neither his conquests nor his army were his own.

All the harpies of avarice and depredation in Paris, seemed to be let loose at once on the miserable conquests of Belgium. Their commission was to sequestrate and revolutionize; a mission which they received either from the convention, or the commune of Paris, or the minister of war, or the society of the jacobins. At their head was Danton and Lacroix, to whose power and avidity every thing gave way. One individual of integrity was found among the whole fraternity of plunderers, and that was Camas, but he saw and condemned their excesses, without the power of repressing them. An industrious and religious people, who, but five years ago, had taken arms to avenge the degradation of their clergy, beheld their churches despoiled of their gold and their ornaments, and such depredations committed on the substance of the country, that all the granaries

CHAP.
XXVI.

1792.

of the husbandmen were in an instant emptied, and the victors themselves began to apprehend a famine, in the heart of a country, proverbial for its fertility. Dumourier was assailed with complaints, from every quarter, of ruin and misery, which he could not prevent. His authority was vilified—his promises of redress were but a derisory consolation.

Such disorders in his army prevented him from following his military operations with the same vigour with which they had commenced. So that, after two months from the time of their perilous retreat, the Austrians were enabled to find a rallying point. General Clairfait had, by this time, assumed the chief command; he had been obliged to retire behind the whole course of the Maese, but the enemy could not force him beyond the Rhine. The course of the Rhine now became a sufficient barrier to arrest the French, who were fatigued with their long career, and who had, besides, neglected the cares of military combats, for those of revolutions. On the whole, the skilful and obstinate resistance of Clairfait, and still more the imprudent conduct of the French, shewed the Austrians, that their cause was not yet desperate. The court of Vienna, according to custom, formed immense preparations for a second campaign, after having been unwisely parsimonious in the means of the former.

It was not without uneasiness, that Dumourier saw this posture of affairs, but still he felt, that his greatest dangers were not to arise from Vienna, but from Paris; and he set out for the latter city, perhaps cherishing yet a hope, that he might effect the revocation of that decree, which had blasted all his prospects. Another alarming circumstance was a motive for his journey, the convention being now occupied in the trial of Louis.

The peaceful private virtues of this high sufferer; the tremendous publicity of his fall; the horror attached to his executioners; and the pity, which no heart refuses to those images of domestic anguish, which their very exposure to pity must have made more severe; these circumstances have occasioned the whole concluding events of Louis's life, to be so familiar to every mind, that their interest is only weakened by new recital. In the few and feeble hands which were lifted up to protest against the mockery of public justice in his condemnation; or the still fewer devoted hearts, who had the courage to console him in those scenes of affliction, where a wife, a sister, a daughter, and an infant-child, hung on the last embraces of an affectionate man, and convulsed the sensibilities of his nature; in the traits and characters of worth in the loyalty of the venerable Malherbes, and the fidelity of Fremont and Clery, there is something that redeems the character of the times from its general charge of stupidity, or ferocity. Even in the indirect efforts of the Girondists, to save the king, there is a humanity which reconciles us to them. The praise of this humanity is not indeed to be claimed by the whole party. The bitter and sarcastic Gaudet traced the pretended crimes of Louis, as well as the jacobins; and Condorcet, in a reverie of philanthropy, abjuring capital punishments, voted that the king should not be beheaded, but treated with mercy. The mercy he proposed, was to keep him in irons for life. A bolder, and better, division of the party, disdaining an equivocal resistance to cruelty, came openly forward in vindication of his innocence, and delivered themselves in the most touching language of humanity. Among those honours of an unworthy assembly, were the deputies Rosée, Morisson, and Brisson. In defi-

CHAP.
XXVI.

2793.

ance of a banditti, who crowded the avenues and galleries of the convention, in contempt of all the cannibals of the mountain, who told them, by their fierce looks, 'vote for the death of Louis, or expect your own.' These intrepid men drew a number of the undecided to their cause. When the question was put by the jacobins, 'has Louis been guilty of conspiracy?' they boldly proposed another question, 'has no body conspired against Louis?' But on Louis's condemnation too much depended, for the jacobins not to watch it as the die that was to be cast for their victory in the game of blood. Their courage rose with the hesitation of that irresolute majority of the members, who would have voted for Louis if they durst: it rose with the accession of Barrere to their opinion, who proclaimed, 'that the tree of liberty must be watered with the blood of tyrants.' His party were not yet jacobins, but their nature tended to that metamorphosis, and what was cowardice now, might, by the tasting of blood, be nourished into cruelty. The strength of the jacobins also rose by the neutrality of half the Girondists, men who had neither courage to be virtuous, nor vicious in perfection. Among the votes of the jacobins, some were characteristically given. Legendre's was, 'that the body of Louis be torn in pieces, and distributed among the départiments.' Who would conceive, that this Legendre was the man, who, by an unheard of reformation of his nature, rendered important services to humanity, at a subsequent and memorable epoch?

On the 21st of January, the inhabitants of Paris were assembled under arms, to be witnesses of this punishment; they were in fact called to protect it. The commune of Paris was not ignorant, that the great majority of the citizens beheld this sacrifice with horror; and it armed them, that it.

might have nothing to fear, that is to say, it arrayed them, timid and suspicious, under its lictors. As courage is infectious in multitudes, so also is fear; and terror is never so deep as when it is read in every surrounding eye. The people repaired in alarm to their sections; woe to them that were absent; their names were immediately registered. On entering their ranks, every one was astonished to find so many desirous of the blood of the king. A double line of men, thus assembled, filled all the places through which Louis was to be conducted to death. When he was seen, or believed to be seen, (for he was almost concealed in the carriage by those who conducted him) the arms of the ranks seemed to tremble and fall from their hands: Cries of ferocity were but faintly heard, and nothing restrained the sighs of the spectators, but the fear of their being perceived. But when Louis had ceased to live, the public grief broke out without concealment. The people returned mournful, and absorbed in thought. The very rabble, either from pity, or because their curiosity had been disappointed, threw out execrations on Santerre, who had suppressed the last words of Louis, by the beating of drums. During the day, Paris was silent, its streets deserted; the people were, in general, shut up in their families, to weep. They were only traversed, at times, by bands of brigands, whose songs and barbarous dances expressed fury, and would have wished to imitate joy.

The declaration of hostilities on the side of Britain, was speedily followed by a severe enactment of the legislature against traitorous communication with the enemy. The bill introduced by Sir John Scott, on this subject, was rather an explanation of the treason statute, than a new law. The chief objects of the law were to uphold the prohibitions

CHAP.
XXVI.

on British subjects, from sending military, naval, and other stores, to the aid of the enemy and to prevent the subjects of Britain from going out of the kingdom without a licence, or making purchases of French funds, or French lands. A spirited and humane interference of the minority, prevented the house from giving sanction to two clauses of the bill, which were shewn to be unjust and impolitic. One of these was a clause, excluding British subjects who had property in France from returning home; and the other prohibiting them from purchasing property in France, under still severer penalties.

April.

As the term of the East-India Company's charter was nearly exhausted, their petition for its renewal was introduced, during the present session, by Mr. Dundas. At a period, when the theories of enlightened economists were so generally received with reputation, and incorporate monopolies so far from being popular, it was to be expected, that some resistance would be made to the continuance of the East-Indian charter. Anticipating this opposition, Mr. Dundas introduced the motion, by drawing a most flattering picture of the advantages which had resulted from the management of India, both in trade and government, as it was exercised at present. 'Theories,' he observed, ~~had~~ been devised, and imaginary advantages had been conjured up, which, however applicable to other cases, were not so to the politics or commerce of the east. Writers on political economy had denied, that an extensive empire could be governed by a commercial association; the same theorists thought, that trade should, in no instance, be shackled by exclusive privileges. 'In deviating from these principles, which had been admitted and admired, popular prejudices,' he said, 'were to be encountered; but let the legislature

fix their attention on the advantages which Britain
absolutely from India in its present
state, and whether it would be politic to
forego the search of greater advantages,
which might prove only chimerical. The wealth
and revenue is drawn from India,' (said Mr.
Dundas) we told by some speculators on this
subject, might still pass as plentifully to England,
through private hands, as through the company.
But though the open trade might become a means
of realizing the revenue in Britain, there were
very fatal consequences, both to Britain and to
India, which might result from the experiment.
If the inhabitants of Britain were to be permitted
freely to emigrate to India, colonization would nat-
urally follow, which would very soon annihilate
the respect paid to the British character in India.
Besides, in acquiring settlements, the Europeans
must drive the natives from the spots which have
been so long enjoyed by them and their fathers;
and in pursuing occupations, the new comers
would enhance the price of labour to a degree,
that would greatly diminish the profit of Indian
imports. It is also to be considered, that disap-
pointed adventurers would seek and find employ-
ment in the armies of the Mahrattas and Tippoo
Saib, and furnish our rivals in India with Euro-
pean recruits. Nor can it be supposed, that the
open trader would conscientiously hesitate to sup-
ply the native powers with military stores, which
might enable them to set us at defiance. On the
subject of monopolies,' continued Mr. Dundas,
'a distinction ought to be made between the nar-
row aspect of a general monopoly, and an exclu-
sive privilege given by the legislature to a company
subject to regulation and public controul. This
being admitted, will the legislature change a cur-
rent which is turning the greatest wheel of British

CHAP.
XXVI.

1793.

commerce, and which is about to become independent of its duties and customs, one of the resources of the nation?" The bill passed, after a resistance comparatively feeble, to what the laboured defence of this monopoly by the mover, seemed to anticipate; and the charter was renewed for twenty years.

A spirit of commercial speculation had been for some time increasing in every part of the kingdom, and, by a check which it received at this period, seemed to threaten public credit with serious danger. The circulating specie being by no means sufficient to answer the increased demands of trade, the quantity of paper currency brought into circulation, as a supplying medium, was so great, that a pecuniary scarcity was produced, which threatened stagnation to the commercial credit. By the report of the committee laid before parliament, after the best information had been collected from mercantile men, it appeared, that the general bankruptcy had arisen from a rush of demands on some mercantile houses, who, with insufficient capital, had issued large quantities of paper. The failure of those had ruined others who had sufficient property, but property not immediately convertible into gold and silver. In the alarm spread by reports of bankruptcy, the notes of bankers had come into them for change, in such numbers, that they were obliged to keep their gold and silver beside them in extraordinary quantities; and from this circumstance, the difficulty of procuring hard cash, had become oppressive to the substantial, as well as the upstart trader. On the statement of these circumstances to parliament, a relief of £5,000,000, in the shape of exchequer bills, was immediately voted, and the bills issued at a moderate interest, on the security of goods deposited by those who received

assistance in different parts of the kingdom; a measure which rescued public credit, and restored prosperity.

CHAP.
XXVI.

1793.

About the period when Dumourier was engaged in corresponding with Cobourg, proposals for opening a negotiation for peace were made by the French minister Le Brun, through a very unusual channel. On the 26th of April, Lord Grenville received two letters from the French minister Le Brun: the purport of the first was, to announce that the French republic desired to terminate all differences with Great Britain; the second was to claim a safe conduct for M. Maret, who was to be deputed, on the side of France, to conduct the negotiation. The letters were addressed to a notary-public in London, of the name of Salter, who delivered them to the British secretary of state: but no notice was taken of the overtures; nor were they, like other overtures for negotiation, submitted to parliament for discussion. 'The proposal to commence so important a business,' say the abettors of Mr. Pitt's administration, 'through the agency of an obscure notary-public, was as ridiculous as it was unusual. It would have been disgraceful and unfortunate to have closed with Le Brun's proposal; an individual, who was known to be rash and faithless, and who had been the foremost of the convention to clamour for a war with England. Besides, within a short time after the proposal was made, Le Brun and his party perished, by the ascendancy of a still more odious faction.'

At this moment, when we experience the full effects of the war with France, the mind will receive, with little approbation, those reasons for declining a pacific offer. The offer was officially made, although communicated through an unusual channel. To speak of the insincerity of offers

CHAP.
XXVI.

1793.

before they are made, and to pass sentence on intentions before they have been explained, is a contempt of common sense, as well as of self-preservation.³

The events of this war, as will be seen in surveying the campaign of 1793, were, during the summer of that year, on the whole, prosperous to the allies. Holland was delivered, Flanders recovered; the frontier towns of France were assailed; while the republic was torn with internal divisions. Such a moment seemed favourable for the attainment of peace; and the small band of the minority, who had ever deprecated the impolicy of the war, urged for embracing the best occasion that might ever occur for concluding it.

The last important business of the house, before its prorogation, was a motion made by Mr. Fox, to address his majesty, in the name of the commons, that an aid might be put to the war, since the object avowed by us at its commencement was now obtained: our allies secured from invasion, and the French repelled within their ancient limits. Mr. Fox, in his present motion, did not wish to arraign the justice of England in having com-

³ For an explanation of this affair, the reader may consult Bisset's History of England, who received his information from Mr. David Williams, of several important circumstances respecting this mission. Mr. Williams, the author of Letters on political liberty, had been invited to France before the war, and consulted by the party of Roland on the formation of the new constitution. His influence with the Gironde faction very probably pointed out to them the impolicy of a war with England. He was solicited to go himself to England, as ambassador for negotiating peace; but declined the offer. On the declaration of war, Mr.

Williams returned; and an obscure person of the name of Mathews, being some time after at Paris, had the incidental reputation of being in the confidence of Mr. Williams; he was, therefore, entrusted with dispatches from the French government, and lodged the letter with the attorney Salter. The employment of a notary-public has been stated as ridiculous; but Mr. Brun did not propose Mr. Salter as a negotiator; he employed him as a courier, for carrying an offer of sending, as an ambassador, M. Maret, who had, a few months before, conferred and negotiated with Mr. Pitt.

enced hostilities; but to shew, that even supposing the grounds of war unexceptionable, we had come to the ends proposed, and must start a new object before we could justify a farther prosecution of it. Were we at war to protect Holland? she was now safe from every attack. What was it we were now fighting for? For our religion? it was not attacked. For our constitution? it was perfectly secure. A difficulty often started with respect to peace was, that we could not treat with France in its present state; but, sometime or other, we must treat with one or more at the head of the government of France, unless we meant to fight them till such a government was established as we should approve of. This amounted to saying, that we should dictate a government to them. It was a new thing, he said, to hear that, to be at peace with a people, we must approve of their form of government. At this rate, we might be at war for ever. Mr. Windham acknowledged, that so far as the declared object of the war regarded Holland and Flanders, the statement of Mr. Fox was right; but, with respect to the alleged disavowal of any interference as to the internal government of France, he had not displayed equal prudence. He admitted, that we had disavowed any intention to establish any particular form of government; but it was the avowed purpose of the war to bring about the establishment of such a government in that country as we could safely treat with: we were to prosecute the war till we could make peace with safety. The motion was rejected by an enormous majority; and shortly after the session was concluded.

The supplies of the year being necessarily magnified by the year-establishment of the army and navy, and by the pay of foreign subsidies, a loan of £4,500,000 was required, besides the ordinary

CHAP.
XXVI.

1793.

national funds. In this loan the stagnation of national credit was severely experienced, so as to require a premium of eight per cent. to the lenders. For defraying the interest of the loan, the provisions were, ten per cent. on assessed taxes, an additional duty on British spirits, on bills, receipts, and on game-licences.

The opening of the year 1793 exhibited the following state of our alliances in Europe.—Russia was only verbally attached to the common cause against France. She had recalled her minister, on the taking of the bastille, and suspended all commercial intercourse with the republic after the execution of Louis. Still, however, her active exertions were employed in another quarter: while her words exhorted the whole world to punish the wickedness of the French, her sword was employed in reaping a harvest of atrocious oppression in Poland, and preparing for its final annihilation as a kingdom. The court of Naples had always shewn itself hostile to the French revolution, and was only obliged, by the appearance of a French squadron on its coast, to make a formal acknowledgment of the republic. On the death of Louis, a convention was entered into between their Britannic and Sicilian majesties, by which the former was to protect the dominions of the other, with a fleet in the Mediterranean, and to grant a subsidy besides. Spain declared war against the republicans on the 17th of March of this year. A family connection with Spain, and a commercial intercourse with Britain, rather than any injuries demanded or received, contributed to render Portugal a party to the war within five weeks after. With Prussia our alliance stipulated, that the high contracting powers should respectively shut up their ports against the French; and that they should not lay down their arms but by common

consent, without a restitution of all conquests made upon either his Britannic or Prussian majesties, or such of their allies, to whom they might think proper to extend this guarantee. This convention was made in March, and renewed in the autumn of the same year. A similar agreement was entered into with the emperor, about the same time. The landgrave of Hesse-Cassel engaged, by a stipendiary treaty, to furnish 12,000 infantry and cavalry, for a subsidy of 225,000 crowns per annum; and stipulated, with commercial scrupulosity, for remuneration to be received for loss of stores, artillery, and men. Engagements of a similar kind were made with the margrave of Baden, the landgrave of Hesse-Darmstadt, the duke of Brunswick, and by his majesty George III with himself, in his capacity of the elector of Hanover.

By our subsidiary treaty with the king of Sardinia, his Sardinian majesty was to keep up an army of 50,000 men, to act in his own defence, as well as to assist the common cause. He was to receive £200,000 sterling a-year from his Britannic majesty, who agreed, on his part, to make no peace that should not keep the Sardinian dominions entire, and to keep up a strong naval force in the Mediterranean.

CHAP. XXVII.

Continued ascendancy of the jacobins after the trial of Louis. . . . New efforts of the cabinet of Vienna for the recovery of the Netherlands . . . Landing of the duke of York in Holland, and check of Dumourier at Williemstadt. . . . Defeat of General Miranda by the prince of Cobourg. . . . Defection of Dumourier. . . . Establishment of the revolutionary tribunal. . . . Insurrection of the 21 of June, in which the Girondists are proscribed. . . . Death of Marat, inflicted by Charlotte Corday. . . . War of the convention with the confederated States. . . . and with the royalists of La Vendée. . . . Campaign of the northern army of France against the allies. . . . Sieges of Valenciennes and Dunkirk. . . . Operation in the West Indies.

CHAP.
XXVII.

1793.

THE event of Louis's death was almost immediately succeeded by the declaration of war with England and Spain. The manifestoes of France were seconded by an immediate levy of 300,000 men.

General Clairfait, with his usual ability in military movements, had abandoned the defence of the Meuse, to maintain himself behind the Rhoer. The French army, fatigued with their useless efforts to harass him, were daily wasting away by the rigours of the season and excessive privations; while the soldiers, satisfied with one conquest, appeared, to have no anxiety for more. The Austrian army, on the contrary, seemed to forget defeats, and every day received new reinforcements. Never did the cabinet of Vienna display more activity or ambition: it put at the head of its army

in the Netherlands the prince of Saxe-Cobourg, a general who had distinguished his name in the war of Joseph II against the Turks. The king of Prussia also exerted himself to repair the reputation of his arms: he succeeded in chasing Custine from Frankfort, and proceeded to invest Mentz. On the other side, Bournonville, before entering on his war-ministry, had been completely foiled in an expedition which he attempted against the electorate of Treves, in which a great part of his army perished miserably among the snows. His misfortune was the more humiliating, that he had not a little abused the credulity of his countrymen in his presumptuous account of a former engagement. The official detail of this affair, which excited so much ridicule, stated, that it had cost the enemy 1,500 men, and the French only one soldier wounded on the little finger !!!

Two of the French armies, those of the Rhine and of the Moselle, were now obliged to act on the defensive, and both of them in an alarming situation. The army of Dumourier might have indeed disengaged them; but that commander was already ordered, with a considerable part of his forces, towards Holland. Dumourier, although submitting to the necessity of attempting what he judged, if not impracticable, at least most perilous, traced the plan of his new campaign with as much resolution and boldness, as if it had been the favourite of his own wishes; and he had soon to congratulate the assembly of his most mortal enemies on the unexpected facility of the conquest of Holland. The city of Breda surrendered to him, with somewhat more precipitation and cowardice than the city of Longwy had shewn in surrendering to the Prussians. Although the place was strongly garrisoned, had abundance of artillery, and was well provisioned, yet, when the French

CHAP.
XXVII.

1793.

had thrown a few ineffectual bombs, and were thinking of retiring, the governor offered to capitulate. Klundert and Gertruydenburg offered no better resistance. A series of successes announced that the enemies of the stadtholder secretly supported and wished for such invasion. Dumourier, on the other side, blockaded Bergen-op-Zoom, and prepared for the passage of Moerdick; but, at the city of Williamstadt, his triumphant arms received their first check. Already the advanced guard of the English troops, under the duke of York, had debarked in Holland: their presence imposed a restraint on the favourers of the French; and a detachment entering Williamstadt, turned the tide of Dumourier's fortune. Dumourier had charged General Miranda with the siege of Maestricht, the possession of which could alone secure to the French the conquest of the Netherlands; but Maestricht opposed a most determined resistance. A corps of French *émigrés* had been shut up within its walls, who fought with all the courage of despair. The army, which covered the siege, stretched as far as Aix-la-Chapelle, a line of cantonments by far too extensive. The prince of Cobourg meditated a surprise, and feigned inaction; but, on the 1st of March, he suddenly opened the campaign, carried their advanced posts, favoured, perhaps, by some intelligence from the enemy, but, above all, by the state of indiscipline which reigned in their army. There was no rallying, no resistance, no symptoms of the victors of Jemappe. The route was such, that some of the runaways arrived at Paris, where they were well received by the jacobins, because they covered their disgrace by denouncing a general, whom they had betrayed. Miranda was thus obliged to raise the siege of Maestricht; and the Austrians, under Cobourg, repassed the Maese.

From the moment these misfortunes were known, the convention saw no hope of safety but in Dumourier. He received orders to abandon his enterprize upon Holland, and to reunite all his forces, for the purpose of opposing Cobourg. Although Dumourier had opened the campaign with disagreeable presentiments, yet the enthusiasm which inspired him for the plan of his own conception, and the late success of having carried three strong fortifications, had given a confidence to the whole bent of his thoughts.

At a distance from the convention, his imagination was busied in devising the means of ruling it, or at least reducing it to silence. He managed the jacobins, by means of two of their chiefs, Danton and Lacroix, who almost always marched in his train, to pick up the spoils which he let fall for them. On the other hand, he kept up a correspondence with the Girondists, through the medium of Gensonne, who informed him of the dangers to which his party was exposed. Dumourier, though he had no affection for the Girondists, wished to protect them. He circulated at Paris a letter from himself, in which he threatened the jacobins with the vengeance of his army, if they should make any attempt on the liberty or lives of their political rivals. This manner of declaring himself, which was but a poor imitation of the letter which La Fayette had written, in a former year, to the legislative assembly, seemed only calculated to expose him to still deeper resentments: yet still Danton and Lacroix had sufficient power, and, what is still more astonishing, sufficient fidelity, to suspend the wrath of the jacobins. Danton demanded that the charge of superintending Dumourier should be entrusted to himself: he set out for Belgium, and promised, at his departure, ei-

CHAP.
XXVII.

1793.

ther to bring the general to a speedy repentance for his rash declaration, or to bring him to Paris, bound hand and foot. Undoubtedly the manner of Danton's devoting himself to the task may lead us to suppose a concerted intrigue between Dumourier and himself; and to guess which of the two deceived the other?

But it was not Danton; it was the fate of a battle, which was to decide whether Dumourier was culpable or not. The general now repaired to his fugitive army, who saluted him as their deliverer, and seemed to resume their boldness and sense of honour at his appearance. Trusting in this enthusiasm, which his presence produced, Dumourier wished to profit by it without delay, and engaged the enemy before Tirlemont. The result was favourable to the French: it was, however, but a deceitful forerunner of a more decisive battle, which was yet to take place. The battle of Neerwinde was fought on the 18th of March, where the French arms had once been victorious, under Marshal Luxemburg, with such memorable effusion of blood. The wing where Dumourier commanded in person repulsed the Austrians; but the bad success of the left wing induced all the consequences of a defeat; and although, in the eyes of military critics, the plan of the battle of Neerwinde appeared superior to that of the brilliant temerity of Jemappé, yet its failure was the loss of Belgium to the French.

In spite of this check, however, Dumourier, cherishing some hopes of preserving his conquests, or wishing to make himself formidable to his enemy even in retreat, sustained another murderous encounter, on the heights of Fer-de-Louvain, where he lost still more men than at Neerwinde, and without being able to balance the suc-

cess. A dreadful spectacle was now presented to his eyes, in the vengeance of the Belgians on the fugitive French. The oppressor and the oppressed took leave, with the bloodiest tokens of reciprocal hatred.

CHAP.
XXVII.

1793.

In proportion as his retreat brought him nearer France, Dumourier found himself approaching the vengeance of his enemies. Humiliated and threatened as he had been in the midst of victory, what could he expect from them in defeat? It was supposed to be a short time after this last engagement, that he gave way to the desperate state of his fortune; and, perceiving no other means of fulfilling his vast projects, negotiated with the Austrians. After several interviews with General Mack, he was obliged to subscribe to conditions, which exposed him to the appellation of traitor; but he hoped to efface the reproach by what he might accomplish at the head of a new party. But he prepared nothing: he precipitated every thing: he wished to strike terror into the convention, before he had secured the pledges which could accomplish one half of his plan; and told his friends and enemies with the same indiscriminate presumption, 'I shall march to Paris.' Three deputies of the convention, Proby, Percira, and Dubisson, were dispatched by that body to acquaint them with the intentions of the general. To these ambassadors of his enemies he prematurely disclosed all his views of restoring a king, and the constitution of 1791; and if the remnant of the Bourbons should be cut off by the cruelty of the Parisians, he threatened instantly to march against the Parisians, and chastise

In his interview with these men, Dumourier threw out some words, which made it be suspected, that he wished to place Orleans on the throne; his subsequent

threat to march to Paris, if the dauphin was injured, is at variance with this interpretation of his words.

CHAP.
XXVII..

1793

them. When we blame the creditable ingenuousness of Dumourier, for so prompt a declaration, our censure should stop here with respect to the whole plan in which he was now engaged. He wished to restore royalty, and no means were conceivable, but to co-operate with the enemies of France; to arrest the jacobins; to save his country from the worst of horrors. It seems unjust, that his character should have been loaded with obloquy for this design. Was there ought so sacred in the infant republic, which had been nursed on blood since its birth, that it might not well have been strangled without a crime, ere it reached its abhorred maturity? what could royalty, had it been reinstated in all its powers, (and the supposition is absurd, that it could have again become despotic), ever have accomplished so hideous as the carnage of Lyons, of Marseilles, and La Vendee?

Dumourier, for a while, kept his negotiations with the Austrians, under a veil of mystery: he obtained an armistice, of which his army most gratefully felt the advantages, but did not yet suspect the conditions: he remained some days at Tournay, where his interviews with Mack became longer and more frequent; and the parties found no difficulty in meeting each others views. Already sure of being proscribed in his own country, he wished, at any price, to secure himself a refuge; and the prince of Cobourg hoped to find, in the dangers and despair of the general, the accomplishment of some of the views of the coalition. The result of their agreement was, that the constitution of 1791, should be again offered to the French; and both of the parties published manifestoes, in which it was proposed. With respect to the intended king of this constitution, it is probable, that Dumourier and the prince of Cobourg did not perfectly understand each other.

The general was in the closest intimacy with the eldest son of the duke of Orleans, a young man who was ambitious of acquiring glory, to efface the infamy of his father. The faction of Orleans had many accomplices among the jacobins, those two in particular, Danton and Lacroix, who had followed Dumourier in his expeditions, and had the courage to defend him even after his defeat. The family of Orleans, it is true, might well be supposed to be no favourites of the Austrians, but policy dictated that they should conceal their disgusts, or defer an explanation of them. The great object, in the first instance, was to invade the French frontiers, to have the strong places surrendered, and to open the way to Paris. Dumourier undertook this whole enterprize in his own name.

He conducted himself with little discernment, and with no success. Quitting Tournay, to approach France, he broke up his camp at Maulde, and took post at S^t. Amand. His project was to make sure of Lisle, of Valenciennes, and Condé; to destroy the authority of the convention, in those cities, and proclaim the constitution of 1791. In every one of those attempts he was foiled. Miazinsky, a Polish officer, to whom he entrusted the expedition to Lisle with 4,000 men, was decoyed into the city with a very small escort, where he was arrested, sent to Paris, and finally put to death. Valenciennes declared against him, and Condé shut its gates against the troops and emissaries whom he sent to take possession of it. In the heart of his own army, Dumourier was scarcely more fortunate. Some declarations, it is true, were presented to him after the battle of Nerwinden, by bodies of the troops, who promised, that no attempts of the convention should ever tear them from

CHAP.
XXVII.

1793.

a general, whom they styled the father of his army; but when his agreement with the Austrians was known, and when his enterprizes on Lisie, Condé, and Valenciennes, met with so discouraging a fate, the most distinguished of his generals declared against him, and a number of battalions attached themselves to their party. —

Dumourier was in this desperate situation, when four commissaries of the convention, Camus, Quinette, Bancalé, Lamarque, and the minister of war Bournonville, entered his camp to announce to him the order of the convention; to appear at their bar. He listened with coolness to the commissioners, and answered them with irony; and even made them understand, that the dangers in this conference, were not suspended over him, but themselves. One of the commissioners, Bancalé, quoted to him the most famous examples of obedience and resignation to the governments of their country, in the histories of Greece and Rome. ‘M. Bancalé,’ returned he, ‘we are’ quite mistaken in our quotations, and we disgrace the Romans, when we excuse our own crimes, by the example of their virtues. The Romans did not kill Tarquin; the Romans had a well-regulated republic, and good laws; they had neither a club of jacobins, nor a revolutionary tribunal. We are, on the contrary, in a period of anarchy; there are tigers who wish for my head, but I do not mean to give it up to them. I can make this avowal, without fearing that you will accuse me of weakness. Since you quote the Romans, I declare to you, that though I have acted the part of *Mucius*, I shall never be a *Curtius*. I shall never throw myself into the gulf.’ The interview finished by this question from Camus, ‘citizen general, will you obey the decree of the convention, and repair to Paris?’ ‘Not at present,’ replied Dumourier:

and Camus declared him suspended from his functions. Dumourier was surrounded by several officers of his staff, who, by their murmurs, hastened his premeditated resolution. He ordered some hussars to enter, and ordered them, in German, to take charge of four of the deputies. Bournonville, who was his friend, and whom he had remarked, with emotion, among the number, was not named, but at his own request, was included in the arrest. The whole five were conducted to Tournay, by a squadron of hussars, and delivered over to the Austrians. Dumourier, in this vain moment of triumph, imagined that he had found hostages to answer for the prisoners of the temple; but, within a few months after, the sister of the emperor was led to the scaffold. The well-known result of Dumourier's efforts to gain the succour of his army, drove him, at last, in the most humiliating state, to seek a refuge in the army of Cobourg, followed only by some generals, and officers of his army, whom their intrigues, or indignation, or blind attachment to their leader, had engaged in the enterprise. Some squadrons of hussars passed over to the Austrians, shortly after his departure.

The French army were speedily reunited, under the orders of Dampierre, who was determined to defend his country, whatever were its leaders and its discords. Dampierre, whose illustrious birth, and whose heart, full of honour and humanity, already assured him of the ingratitude of those to whom he devoted himself, probably assumed the command, more from duty than ambition. He rallied the disordered army with great expedition; and, even before discipline could be restored among his soldiers, sought occasions for exercising their valour. After two ineffectual attempts for relieving the blockade of Condé, he perished in an action, where

CHAP.
XXVII.

1793.

his temerity had exceeded the duties of a general. The mind naturally turns with prepossession to the brave man who falls in defence of his country. When we admire, however, the fall of Dampierre, we must regret the misfortune of Dumourier. By the fidelity of Dampierre, a reign of atrocity was prolonged; had he seconded Dumourier, 100,000 assassinations might have been prevented. The prince of Cobourg, with astonishing and phlegmatic appearance of indifference, allowed the fairest opportunity to escape, which fortune ever offered, to a man of talents: he remained passive, when Dumourier was most active, and still passive, when Dumourier was in danger: he did not even pursue the scattered battalions which were flying without leaders or direction. ~~If this~~ arose from respect for the truce which he had signed, it is a memorable example of military fidelity, since he did not even avail himself of the secret articles of the treaty having been broken by the French army. He began to attack the French, when they had begun to recover from their panic.

We may well conceive the trouble and fury of the convention, when this intelligence reached them. Contemporary with the defeat and revolt of Dumourier, was the insurrection of La Vendee, where oppression had driven a brave, a religious, and loyal people, once more to resistance. The convention also learnt, about the same period, of new disasters, and new atrocities, in St. Domingo; of the insurrection of the famous Paoli in Corsica; and of an invasion of part of Roussillon by the Spaniards, conducted by an ardour and ability, which was not supposed to belong to their character. Every one of those misfortunes, served as a motive for boldness, and a means of success, to the jacobins, in a new enterprize, which was now on the eve of execution.

The object of this conspiracy was to exterminate, at one blow, the whole Girondine party, and the most of the deputies who had not voted for the death of the king. The crime was to have been perpetrated in the night of the 9th of March, but all the jacobins were not accomplices. Danton, although he had proposed other measures which became the basis of the revolutionary code, was not willing to assassinate his colleagues; other chiefs of the jacobins were undecided, or, at least, waited for the success of the plot, to avow their decision. It was the commune of Paris, who had conceived the horrid project; yet it could not unite the undecided sanction of even those sanguinary magistrates.

The convention was summoned to a nightly meeting, where it was to be occupied in the formation of a revolutionary tribunal, a measure which the Girondists had constantly opposed with horror. The conspirators counted that night on their resistance, and were to have given their signals to assassins, who were placed in the galleries; it happened, however, that all the deputies, devoted to assassination, were warned of their danger, and did not assist at the meeting. That warning, it was believed, was given by some of the bloody party, whose consciences were not perfectly case-hardened. When the conspirators saw the benches of their adversaries quite deserted, they stood immoveable with astonishment. Presently the hall shook with the fierce imprecations which they lavished on their absent prey. 'They kept well at their post,' cried a voice from the mountain, 'when the question was for saving Louis; but they hide themselves, when the question is for saving their country.' A number of groups, however, speedily assembled over Paris at midnight, and a great many houses were marked out; which they were to enter and

CHAP.
XXVII

1793.

fulfil their murders. This event took place about a month before Bournonville had set out for the camp of Dampurier; and the war-minister, who was among the devoted, had received warning that night, not to sleep at his own house: he left his house accordingly, and put himself at the head of the battalion of Finisterre, a body of provincial troops, who had been brought to Paris before the king's death, by the Girondists, for the avowed purpose of having a respectable band on whom they could depend. With this little troop, Bournonville pursued the quarrel, from which the conspirators were to have sallied, and kept them in check. The night, besides, was rainy, and these men of blood loved to commit murder at their ease.

Next day, the whole city resounded with the news of the dreadful plot which had thus miscarried. The convention itself seemed to have some sense of its danger. The jacobins disavowed the intention of massacre, but not of insurrection. Yet fifteen days had scarcely passed, when the Girondists themselves, despairing of being avenged, began to talk of clemency: and, by this weakness, they allowed a plot to be regarded as fabulous, which, in not one circumstance of its horror, or proximity, had been either false or exaggerated. It was now that those unfortunate men were overwhelmed by every outrage and disgrace, which is the fore-runner of destruction. Yet this period may be regarded, though the most disastrous, as the most honourable in their political career; a period at which they sought to defend the liberties of France, when they could with difficulty defend themselves. This resistance could not, indeed, repel all the horrible laws which were proposed; but it occasionally modified their ferocity. The revolutionary tribunal was created. The conven-

tion also decreed the confiscation of the effects of the condemned, in the barbarous hope of adding a mass of wealth to what they had already seized, under the same pretence. The Girondists had, at first, obtained that this tribunal should not be empowered to prosecute, till after a decree of accusation pronounced by the convention itself. But in a few days after, it was invested with the double privilege of accusing and judging. In this barbarous institution, the name of a jury was profanely introduced. The tribunal named the jurors, and the commune of Paris and the society of jacobins, presented it with men, desirous, and well accomplished, to fulfil those bloody functions. The judges voted aloud, and the judgments were decided by an absolute majority of sailiages. As long as the Girondists preserved a shadow of influence, the new tribunal was allowed but faintly to fulfil the intentions of its founders.

Robespierre and Danton, to swell the vile elements of their factions, occasioned the abolition of imprisonment for debt. They obtained another decree, that all men of that description, whom they named the *sans-culottes*, should receive a pike and a gun; that the rich should pay the expence of this armament; and should themselves be disarmed, under the title of suspected men. Cambon, the intendant of the finances which were levied on this pretext, proposed, and the convention adopted, the unheard-of taxation of a forced loan; and a progressive loan from the rich. To this were added, such revolutionary taxes, levied in every department, as the caprice of the commissaries of the convention chose to impose.

The establishment of a revolutionary tribunal, permitted the execution of another measure, which was necessary for the views of the demagogues. This was to fix the price of provisions, according

CHAP.
XXVII.

1793.

to the convenience of the poor; a robbery which was thus committed upon industry and property, under the well-known name of the law of *maximum*. The commune of Paris came, in the name of the people, to demand this decree of the convention; but the convention, for once, saw the necessity of refusing them. Nothing could better serve the jacobins in their views of vengeance, than the opposition displayed by the Girondists against a measure so very popular. It was, therefore, necessary that they should allow themselves to be defeated, in one debate, on this subject. •

Marat, in his infamous journal, advised the people to go and pillage the magazines of the grocers; and to hang up some of them at their own doors. The very next day his advice was followed; but the pillage amused the blackguards so much, that they did not trouble themselves with murder. The appearance of Paris, during that day, displayed the abject degradation into which society may fall, when it tamely submits to be governed by its impurest dregs. The citizens came to contemplate the disasters of their neighbours; and, if they were not grocers themselves, cried but against the avidity of grocers; those who lamented the pillage, were obliged to conceal themselves. The distribution of the plunder was regularly made, and such as would have blushed at the idea of robbery went eagerly to purchase at the public sale of those effects.

Among the popular men of this time, there existed a monster, who equalled Marat in cruelty, and surpassed him in cynicism. This was Robert, the magistrate of the commune. For three years he had continued to deprave the hearts of the people, by a journal, in which every revolutionary crime was inculcated. It was by this incendiary that the first public signal was given to the Parisian

mob to rise upon the Girondists. The cry 'to arms' was spread; a cry for vengeance on the convention. The commune of Paris declared itself in a state of insurrection: many of the sections imitated their example, and remained assembled during the night. If any of them disapproved of the movement, they were immediately arrested by armed jacobins, and none of the friends of order had courage to sustain the shock of those furies. The Girondists seemed determined, however, to support this unequal combat: they began by interesting in their behalf some of their most cowardly colleagues. Even Barrere talked of protecting them. They announced their determination to defend their lives, even in the hall of the assembly, if their enemies should seek them there; and some of them attended the house with arms. When the jacobins reproached them for it, one of them cried up to the mountain, 'Assassins, you have not here, as in the days of September, to deal with defenceless victims and prisoners.' Immediately some of the Girondists darted on the tribune, revealed the horrid plot which was impended, and named all its proofs and conspirators. The majority of the convention at last were roused, and pressed around them. 'Friends,' they cried out to them, 'we will defend you with our own bodies.' 'Ah!' cried one of the Girondists, 'you should begin by defending us with your decrees.' Without delay the Girondists obtained a decree, which they believed to be a pledge for their salvation. A commission of twelve members was created, to take measures for defending the convention, and was empowered to issue mandates of arrest against the disturbers of public security. No measure of courage or decision was wanting in the members of this commission, of whom the leaders were Rabaut St. Etienne and other characters of worth, to fulfil

CHAP.
XXVII.

1793.

the charge that was entrusted to them. They arrested the atrocious Hebert, in the very midst of his colleagues. Had the convention supported such measures, a few arrestations and a few executions might yet have overthrown the reign of terror; but the clubs, the jacobins, the cordeliers, and the society of human tigresses, called the female fraternal society, were allowed to deliberate day and night, to threaten, and to organize their plots. Rabaut St. Etienne did all that his activity and intrepid influence could accomplish, to keep the flagging resolution of the convention to their duty, and exhorted them not to stop with the arrestation of those machines of anarchy, but to break them in pieces. One knows not by what name to designate the feebleness, the fear, the absurd moderation, which the convention affected, at their last arrival on the brink of destruction, when they admitted those very incendiaries to enter the assembly, to petition for the relief of Hebert, and to obtain the suppression of the commission of public safety.

Even after this disgrace, the Girondists still prepared themselves for maintaining the unequal struggle. They came next day to the convention, and, representing the ignominy of yesterday's concession, obtained another decree, that Hebert should be remitted to prison, and the commission of safety resumed. Hebert appeared at their bar on the 31st of May; but it was only to be attended, and again reclaimed, by a returning body of insurgents, who surrounded the convention with artillery, and obtained from their mock authority, what they had now lost all authority to refuse.

This general rising of the jacobins was, however, only the prelude to another, which was to supersede the future necessity of carrying measures by petition. On the 2^d of June, everything announced in Paris, that a fatal and decisive blow

was to be struck. The commune ordered the sections under arms. Five thousand of their brigands, were sufficient to have fulfilled their design; but, to give their victory more eclat, 24,000 armed Parisians, a trembling undecided band, who had no rallying-point, and no will of their own, were brought out to be the escort of those who were to strike the blow. The command of the whole armament was confided to Henriot, an ignorant and ferocious partizan; his distinction had sprung up from the massacres of September. The choice of such an agent announced the purpose of his employment. At ten in the morning of the 22^d of June, the convention assembled, and the conspirators marched to the convention. The severest orders had been given, that no section should move, until those columns, which were devoted to the service, should have filed past. Some portion of spirit seemed to rise among the Parisians, when the march of those brigands was announced: some individuals had the courage to condemn the insurrection, and at last whole battalions agreed to take the convention under their protection; but those bodies were closely watched, and they were marched, by long circuits, so far from the convention, that they knew of nothing that was passing in its vicinity. The jacobin women, like raging furies, came to insult them; or, pretending to be frightened, conjured them not to kindle a civil war. A cry was immediately spread among the ranks,—‘Let us have no civil war.’ The friends of the Girondists had conjured them to be absent from this fatal sitting; and some of the favours of the insurrection, either from pity or perfidy, had offered them an asylum, or at least the means of escaping by flight. Whatever resolution the Girondists had adopted, it still might have been formidable to their enemies, if it had been unanimous.

CHAP.
XXVII.

1793.

It was necessary either to have braved the storm together, or to have withdrawn from it at the same time; but each of them unhappily determined separately, upon their danger, upon their retreat, or their vengeance. Some of them chose magnanimously to face the demagogues once more, and brave them in the midst of their daggers. From the high spirit of Languinais, this was his resolution, and he drew many along with him: others remained concealed in Paris, determined to set out next day for the departments, and raise the standard of insurrection.

The convention had scarcely met, when it was surrounded by the troops of Henriot, who made his armed petitionaries file through the hall, telling the members to surrender their traitors and conspirators. 'Was it then in vain,' cried Languinais, starting up to the tribune, 'that we announced to you the plots of an usurping commune? Will you then deliver to this commune your colleagues, your authority, your honour? Will you truckle to those new tyrants, you, who have rejected the opportunity of leading them to punishment? or rather will you imitate us, whom their hands are more immediately lifted to strike? will ye await their fury, and defy it? For me, you may make me fall beneath their knife; but I shall never fall at their feet.'

The courage of one man supported the convention: they rejected the bloody petition by the order of the day.

The galleries and petitionaries threw out their curses on the majority, who, after having braved them, would have instantly withdrawn themselves from the scene. All deliberation was interrupted, during two hours of tumult. Several deputies sought, but could not find, an outlet for escape: the armed brigands had beset the doors on every

side. They re-entered: a melancholy calm succeeded the agitation. Barrere mounted the tribune, and proposed, in the name of the committee of public safety, that the accused deputies should be suspended from their powers; a proposal which, while it seemed to soften the terms of proscription, could not but affect the Girondists with a cruel sensation; for, when Louis came as a suppliant, and remained a captive, in the legislative assembly, when his palace was destroyed, and his defenders put to death, he too was only suspended from his powers. Barrere also demanded of the Girondists their voluntary dismission. Many of them were absent; four only submitted. Barbaroux resisted. 'You see,' said he to his enemies, 'I make no sacrifice to your hatred of my duty and my honour. Will you have the generosity to be contented with one victim? Behold he is offered to you: shed my blood, and let it be a sacrifice for all.' He could not continue his speech: he was torn down from the tribune. Languinais sprung up in his place. Legendre, who was then a fanatic, the follower of Danton, and even Marat; Legendre, who afterwards opened his heart to humane sentiments, had the brutality to lay hands on Languinais, and to throw him down; but he could not alter the courage, nor even the serenity, of this man of worth, who still made his voice heard. 'The ancients,' said Languinais, 'when they prepared a sacrifice, crowned their victim with flowers and with fillets; but you, more cruel in your sacrifices, you strike with dishonourable blows; you insult the victim, who makes no effort to steal away from your knife.' The effect of these eloquent words silenced the murderers for a moment; they listened without daring to interrupt him, while this impressive orator denounced on them the very vengeance that would fall on themselves

CHAP.
XXV I.

1793.

for the accomplishment of their present triumph ; while he prophesied their future dissensions, and the horror that would cleave to their names. ‘ The day will come,’ said he, ‘ when you will have made such a league with atrocity, that it will possess you in spite of yourselves.’ He had not yet ceased to speak, when a part of his prediction appeared to be fulfilled, and a slight incident revealed the seeds of discord, which were already sown among the jacobins. Lacroix, the friend of Danton, entered the assembly, with looks of fury and agitation : he had been insulted and threatened by the brigands around the assembly, who had not respected, in his person, one of the habitual and celebrated speakers in the mountain. Danton took the injury of his friend as a personal insult. The jacobins were turbulent and divided ; nor did it seem certain that the commune of Paris would own allegiance to the mountain. While they were doubting, examining, and bullying, Danton cried out, ‘ Let the convention go out in a body, and present itself to those armed men, that it may be assured of their dispositions. This proposal was adopted : it offered a ray of hope to the forlorn deputies ; but, at their first step, every thing threatened them with new dangers. The savages of the mountain would not admit them into their ranks, and only appeared around them like an escort conducting them to execution. When they came to an outlet, Henriot, with his aids-de-camp, and several members of the commune, supported by a triple row of bayonets and pikes, shut up the passage. The decree of the convention was read. ‘ Return,’ said the revolutionary general, ‘ return to thy post ;’ dar’st thou give laws to the insurgent people ?’ Then, turning to the artillery, ‘ Can-

² Thou and thee formed part of the language introduced by republicans.

noneers, said he, 'to your post; citizens, to your arms.' Cannon, loaded with grape-shot, were then pointed against the convention. Several of the jacobin deputies crouched down, in barbarous jest, as if they had dreaded a discharge. Marat embraced Henriot, and thanked him, in the name of his country. The monster was heard urging, on all sides, 'Comrades, no faint-heartedness; do not your posts till they are given up to you.' The crowd of the convention tried an outlet at two other passages, but were twice repulsed; while Marat presented himself at the head of 200 wretches, ready to commence assassination at his signal. 'I command you,' said he to the convention, 'in the name of the people; I command you to re-enter, to deliberate, and obey.' The members then re-entered. A man who, though a monster of guilt, by his infirmities seemed only an object of pity, Couthon, with a calm voice and a ghastly mien, addressed them on their return. 'Well,' said he, 'my colleagues, you may see yourselves, that the convention is perfectly free. The horror of the people is only expressed against its unfaithful mandates; but we are encircled by all their affection and respect. Why, then, do we delay to obey our own consciences, as well as their wishes? I demand that Languais, Vergniaud, Gensonne, Le Hardi, Gaudet, Petion, Billaud, Biroteau, Valaze, Gormaire, Bertrand, Gardien, Kervelegan, Mollevaux, Bergoien, Barbaudoux, Ligon, Buzot, La-source, Rabut, Brissot, Sallice, Chambon, Gorsas, Grangeneuve, Lesage, Vigot, Louvet, and Henry Lariviere, be put in a state of arrestation in their own houses. The greater part of the convention refused to act a part in this proscription, protested against its violence, and gave no votes. The jacobins, rose, escorted by some of their satellites:

CHAP.
XXVII.

1793.

the decree was passed, and the sitting of the convention was raised. The calm which reigned in Paris, during the after part of this day, disguised its horrible consequences in the eyes of the vulgar; and, during several succeeding days, the jacobins seemed to be rather intoxicated with their triumph, than desirous of covering it with blood. But hitherto that triumph was confined to Paris, and it was necessary to submit all France to its consequences. While they raised a thousand scaffolds in their imagination, they kept the apparatus of them concealed. They waited till there should remain not a single enemy in arms to avenge their past enormities, or to anticipate those which were to come. Three months were employed in the formation of dreadful plans, and the celebration of indecent fêtes, to consolidate this victory, and to rally round them all the basest of the lower orders.

The decree of the convention, as we have seen, had ordained the arrested Girondists to be guarded in their own houses. Some of them thought of escape and concealment; others of them saw this first act of rigour exercised upon them without fear: but a few days revealed to them sufficient cause of alarm; and many sought an escape, when it was too late, by corrupting their guards, or else disdained to owe their preservation to enemies. The long time example of the fugitives gave a pretext for conducting those who remained to prison. Among the fugitives, it is with satisfaction that one finds the name of Languinais, who escaped to Caen, and raised the standard of insurrection, for the purpose of avenging and delivering the convention. General Felix Wimpfen, who had so ably defended Thionville against the Prussians, and who commanded in the department of Calvados,

received the proscribed deputies, and made a common cause with them. Three commissaries of the convention presented themselves, to intimidate his preparations, but he followed the example of La Fayette and Dumourier, and arrested them. He negotiated with the neighbouring departments, and received many protestations, but very little succour. The city of Rouen refused to associate with the league, to which its single accession could have given consistency. Unhappily the royalists and Girondists mutually thought it a crime to coalesce; so that the chain of the insurgent departments was broken by the movement of the royalists, who had now spread themselves from Poitou over Brittany.

Three important cities, Nantes, Brest, and L'Orient, animated by their love of liberty and their horror of anarchy, were attached to the cause of the Girondists; but found all their efforts unavailing, because the two latter could not communicate their spirit to the adjacent countries, and Nantes was besieged by the catholic and royal army. Though determined to resist the royalists, the people of Nantes would receive no assistance from the jacobins, but had the generosity to declare for the unfortunate republicans.

Paris, in the meantime, submitting to the yoke of its new masters; imitated the best homage which Rome ever rendered to its most odious tyrants; and, in the general degradation of public spirit, and prostitution of the arts, raised monuments in every quarter to represent the triumph of the mountain. In the midst of these disgraceful scenes, an alarm was spread (on the 11th of July), that Marat had been assassinated; and a beautiful young woman, who did not deny the deed, but boasted in having rid the world of a monster, was brought to trial and public execution. This was Charlotte Corday,

CHAP.
XXVII.
1793.

the daughter of an ancient and honourable family in Caen, who, after the reception of the proscribed deputies in that city, and the atrocities of the jacobins, which she beheld in every quarter, had conceived the design of delivering her country from oppression, by striking at that individual, whom she believed, in the simplicity of her heart, the sole leader and life of the jacobins. In her private life, she had been distinguished by all the amiable virtues of her sex; and, mistaken as she was, as to the importance of this sacrifice, yet, by delivering the world of Marat, she gave an instance of self-devotion, which well entitled her to assume the pride of a heroine in her last moments.³

The mountain was immediately busied with the apotheosis of Marat: his hideous image polluted all the public places; and soon after, in all the cities and villages of France, mounds of earth, covered with turf, were piled up, as hallowed emblems of the mountain. At all these practical solemnities of the jacobins, the youth of both sexes were constrained, by the dread of vengeance suspended over the heads of their parents, to come and throw flowers on the tomb of that monster, who had coolly preached the necessity of cutting off 200,000 heads. The death of Marat served as a pretext for arresting many of those who were on the lists of the proscribed, and pressing for the condemnation of those who had already fallen into the hands of their enemies.

³ During her trial, she struck the spectators by the modesty and simplicity of her manners, the firmness of her countenance, and the pure and prompt, but contemptuous, energy, of her replies to the judges. Before her death, she delivered a letter to her father, which expressed all the filial affection of a daughter, but breathed all the pride and magnanimity of a martyr. It concluded with these words.—‘Adieu, my dear father. I pray you to forget me, or rather to rejoice at my lot; the cause of it is glorious. I embrace my sister, whom I love with my whole heart, as well as my other kindred. Remember the words of Corneille—
‘The guilt that makes thy shame,
and not the sword told.’

Nearly at the same time, the chiefs of the mountain thought of supporting their popularity, by creating a constitution; a constitution, however, which they had promised, in their own hearts, never to establish. They wished to give a reality to their tyranny, and a promise to democratical anarchy. The Girondists, before their fall, had been, in like manner, employed in fabricating a constitution, though with more sincerity. Condorcet, in the name of the committee, had presented the project of a constitution, such as the jacobins might have employed just as well as that which they invented. Herault de Sechelles was employed in reducing the latter to a form. He gave what was demanded, conceptions the most extravagant and anarchical; and the mountain received and presented this code, as if it had been the gift of immortal wisdom. They submitted it for the acceptance of the people, that it might add to the list of the proscribed such as had the imprudent frankness to refuse it; and made the French nation swear to maintain it, while they had sworn in their hearts never to put it in execution.

Several deputies, who were the known and faithful friends of the Girondists, still continued in the convention, taking their places, with an honourable constancy, on the right side of the hall, where the late proscription had left so many empty seats; and their presence served, even yet, to parry sometimes the strokes of tyranny. Their number was seventy-three. Many of them, some days after the 2^d of June, had signed a protest against the transactions of that day. The circumstances of the times perfectly well excused their not publishing this protest for the present; but it remained deposited in the hands of one of their number, Dupeyret, who was arrested after the trial of Charlotte Corday. The protest was discovered in his

possession, and the seventy-three deputies were arrested.

The Girondists experienced, in the south, the same prompt and humiliating reverses. Of seventy departments which embraced their cause, scarce seven or eight made any active efforts in their favour. The mountain dispatched commissaries, selected from its own bosom. These agents arrived before the insurgents had time to concert their measures: they covered the land with assignats; they stifled the will of the people; they armed the jacobins with the sword of extermination, peopled the prisons, and disposed of the scaffolds.

The rich city of Marseilles declared for the Girondists, and levied a small army. Lyons, which was also in a state of insurrection, and was preparing to support a siege, demanded assistance of the Marseillois. The army of the latter city ascended the banks of the Rhone, and entered Avignon. General Cartaux, however, met them, at the head of 2,000 jacobins, put them to the rout, received a great number of deserters, pursued the vanquished, and in a short time presented himself before Marseilles. It was for sometime proposed, in this place, to maintain a siege; but a cry of distress and revolt was raised among the workmen, who made themselves masters of the city, and designed themselves the army of General Cartaux. Vengeances then entered those devoted habitations: numbers fell under the implacable administration of the commissary Freron; others fled to Toulon.

The jacobins had long oppressed Toulon; and indeed, in massacres, had surpassed the Septemberizers of Paris. Warned by the example of Lyons, the inhabitants of Toulon united to rid themselves of this domestic tyranny; and, succeeding in their enterprize, declared for the Girondists:

but the fate of the Marseillois too soon gave them a melancholy presage of their fate. The army of Cartaux was approaching: the timidity and agitation of the people, as well as the approach of famine, gave but indifferent hopes of defence; and the jacobins among themselves threatened them, even in their chains. While Toulon was in these desperate circumstances, Lord Hood presented himself in their harbour. He offered them the assistance of two powerful squadrons for their defence against the jacobins; and the guarantee of two crowns for the restoration of the city and fleet to the king of France, in the event of a general peace. Toulon submitted to the British arms on these conditions. From the people of Bourdeaux the Girondists expected the most courageous efforts; but it was in vain that its governor and principal inhabitants devoted themselves to this unfortunate cause. A scarcity raged in the place; and the jacobins, who found means to persuade the people, that they alone could prevent them from starving, obtained possession of the city. Tallien was immediately dispatched by the convention, with the previous instructions, which the committee of public safety usually gave to the inhabitants. Thus ended the civil war of the Girondists.

During these events, the bravery of the Vendean royalists had met with a different fortune: they had been victorious in all their excursions; they had drawn after them the inhabitants of the country, and terrified those of the cities. From England they had hitherto received but small assistance; considerable reinforcements, however, had been offered, if they could make themselves masters of any port which could favour our communications. For the attainment of this object, the royalists immediately made an effort upon Nantes. Every thing

(HAP.
XXVII.

1793.

to favour this attack: the city had refused to acknowledge the authority of the convention; it had already lost the flower of its youth in civil war, and it was not fortified; while, on the other hand, the royal army had never before been so numerous or so bold.

But Nantes, even in these circumstances, successfully opposed all the heroism and ability of the Vendéans, with the courage which despair supplied. The Vendéans could, by no efforts, supply their fatal want of artillery; and they were driven from before the place, with the loss of some thousands.

Fifty thousand new troops arrived soon after from Paris, who had sworn to exterminate the remainder of the Vendean army: they were, in general, composed of those brigands, who had besieged the convention on the 2^d of June, and were commanded by men well worthy of such a banditti.⁴ Their chief successes were confined to conflagration and pillage. Such, indeed, was their impolitic cruelty, that they were observed to drive more partizans to the side of the royalists, than they brought combatants to oppose them. But the courage of this jacobin army was as deficient as their conduct: they brought along with them two fine parks of artillery, which the valour of the Vendéans forced out of their hands, in combats, where frequently the royalists had no weapons but sticks. It was the custom of the Vendéans, on the first appearance of the enemy's cannons, to divide into small bodies of ten or twelve, allotting to each the charge of capturing a single piece: they threw themselves on the ground when they saw the match applied to the cannon; then, starting up when it was discharged, they would rush

⁴ Their leaders were, Santerre, Rosignol, and Roussin.

on with such resolution, that the republicans seldom waited for their closer approach. On all occasions, the fanaticism of religion overcame that of liberty, because it was more sincere; yet, after those prodigies of valour; after beating, on the memorable field of Montaigne, 40,000 of the conventional troops, with only 5,000 half-armed men; after a series of victories, as great as those which have sometimes decided the fate of Europe, the chiefs of La Vendee found, that they were invincible only on their own soil, and that victory itself could only enable them to sustain a defensive warfare.

CHAT.
XXVII.
1793.

The same disgraces accompanied the republican arms at the foot of the Pyrennees. A Spanish army having penetrated, by ways that were deemed impracticable, as far as Bellegarde, had taken that important fortress; and, forcing their way through a great part of the department of the Eastern Pyrennees, made themselves masters of the harbour of Collioure.

On the side of the Alps, similar disasters befel the republic. General Kellerman had been recalled from Savoy, with a considerable portion of his army, and forced to march against the Lyonesse. The Savoyard troops began to re-enter their native territory, although their progress was not so rapid, as their retreat had formerly been.

On the northern side of France, the coalition obtained such successes, as carried terror to Paris itself; and renewed the same alarms which the first approach of the Prussians had excited. The progress of the prince of Cobourg, had been arrested before Condé; but a blockade of four months had exhausted the provisions of the garrison, and they surrendered prisoners of war. Valenciennes was the next important strong-hold which the allies wrested from France, in spite of a

CHAP.
XXVII.
1793.

May 8.

resolute defence, and a situation, fortified by all the genius of Vauban. The siege of the latter place was preceded by one of the most humiliating defeats which the French sustained during the war. Dampierre remained on the defensive at Famars, only as long as was absolutely necessary to repair the discipline and strength of his army; but knowing the genius of his countrymen to be better suited for active than passive warfare, he proceeded to make a diversion in favour of Condé, before it had yet surrendered; and attacked the allies at Quivrain. The French were here repulsed with the loss of many men, and a great portion of their artillery. Still, however, they were resolved to act on the offensive: their troops sallied out of Lisle; and their main body advanced from the camp of Famars. The troops of General Clairfait, of Prince Cobourg, and of the Prussians, occupying a formidable line of posts along the camp of St. Amand, the village of Reims, and the abbey of Vicogne, were assaulted with the greatest fury; and would have probably been carried, had not the arrival of the duke of York, with the English and Hanoverians, turned the fortune of the day. Their share in the action reflected no small honour on the English arms. The Coldstream arrived at a critical moment, when the French were advancing towards the great road in front of the allies, and had nearly commanded it by the fire of their cannon. The Coldstream, with an intrepidity worthy of their country, made a charge, with fixed bayonets, which turned the foremost line of the French. The gallantry of all the British who were engaged was distinguished in a similar manner. The action cost the French 4,000 men, and the loss of their leader, Dampierre, who died of his wounds on the following

day, leaving the command of the army to General La Marche.

CHAP.
VII.

1793.

The allies were now enabled to become the assailants; and preparations were made, on the 23^d, to attempt the camp of Famars, as well as the whole lines of the French, from Orchies to Maubeuge. Sixteen battalions of English and Hanoverians, and a chosen body of Austrian infantry, were put in the front of this attack. The enemy retreated across the Ronelle before the column of his royal highness, and afterwards behind the village of Famars. Their greatest resistance was experienced at another point of attack, which was assigned to General Clairfait, at the head of a strong column of imperialists. This was on the heights of Anzain, where the Austrians at last prevailed; while the English and Hanoverians possessed themselves of the camp of Famars. A position was thus secured to the allies, which over-looked Valenciennes, which was now besieged. The route of the French had been complete; and a great part of their artillery, and magazines, fell into the hands of the victors.

In this perilous state of his army, La Marche resigned; and the convention recalled Custine from the army of the Rhine, to repair their fallen fortunes in the north. He accepted the dangerous trust; although the disorders which he now witnessed much exceeded his expectations: he thought to struggle with his evil fortune, by studying the resources of that military circumspection, which applies to cases nearly desperate: he took post at the camp of Caesar, at such a distance from the enemy, as betrayed all his fears. The committee of public safety, wrote to him in these words, 'deliver Valenciennes, or your head shall be the forfeit.' Custine replied, that the army which had been driven from protecting Valenciennes

CHAP.
XXVII.

1793.

nes, could never be expected to raise the siege. 'You would save,' said he, 'Valenciennes, and I would save France. Take my life, or respect my duties.' The siege of Valenciennes was continued, till a considerable part of the town was reduced to ashes. On the 26th of July, General Ferrand surrendered the city to the duke of York, who took possession of it in the name of the emperor of Germany.

Soon after, the camp of Cæsar was forced, after a hard engagement; and the French were driven, from their entrenchments, behind the Scheldt. Custine was re-called to Paris, where he vainly trusted to find protection in his fidelity, and his innocence, from the bloody judgments of the revolutionary tribunal.

Meanwhile, the king of Prussia had repaired the ignominy of his last campaign. After the unexpected attack, which had put him in possession of Frankfort, he had besieged Mentz, and the fort of Cassel, of which Custine had made an able defence. The manner in which this commander suddenly raised the siege of Mentz, one of the most important fortresses of Europe, is regarded as one of the happiest of his military achievements. Alexander Beauharnois, who succeeded Custine in commanding the army of the Rhine, made an effort to succour the besieged: he had already gained some signal advantages, and was advancing, with the happiest prospects, when he learned that they had been obliged to surrender. A most formidable artillery was found in the place; the garrison were allowed to return to France, on condition of not serving against the allies. In his eagerness to obtain a surrender, the king of Prussia thus permitted an army of 10,000 men to re-enter France, and to carry on the war against the Vendéans, whose efforts were, in truth, more in-

portant in the cause of the coalition, than those of any of the allies.

CHAP.
XXVII

1793.

While the republic was thus a prey to internal distractions, the capture of Valenciennes, and the forced retreat of the wreck of the French army, from under the protection of Cambray, seemed to offer the fairest hopes to the allies. While so imposing a mass as their united forces kept together, nothing could withstand its efforts; it was only by division that it could be over-come. But the allied courts entertaining separate views of aggrandizement, agreed to separate their forces: the Austrians undertook the siege of Quesnoy; the duke of York, at the head of the English troops, and a body of Dutch and Hanoverians, advanced, and occupied a camp in the neighbourhood of Menin; a most fatal era in the history of the war. No sooner were the French apprized of this intended dispersion, than they determined to resume offensive operations. Taking advantage of the inactivity of the Prussians after the conquest of Mentz, they made drafts from the army of the Rhine and Moselle, while new levies were embodied and disciplined; and a general, whose reputation was high, though his end was unfortunate, was placed at the head of the army of the north, with orders to leave the enemy no rest, but to wear them out with reiterated attacks.

The French having attacked Linclles, a post lately taken, and occupied, by the hereditary prince of Orange, the Dutch troops were, at first, repulsed by their ardour and numbers; but the British troops immediately marching to the recovery of the place, advanced under a heavy fire from a redoubt of uncommon strength, which defended the village of Linclles; and, after discharging a few

CHAP.
XXVII

1793

rounds of musketry, carried the works by the bayonet. In this display of British soldiership, it was ascertained, by the concurring testimony of French prisoners, that the enemy's post was defended by 5,000 men, while the assailants did not amount to half of that number.

On the 22^d, the duke of York proceeded to attack the camp of Ghivelde; and brought his besieging army to approach the town of Dunkirk. The enemy abandoned the camp to him; and he was almost immediately enabled to take the ground, which it was his intention to occupy during the siege, leaving Field-marshal-Freytag, with a covering army of 12,000 Hanoverians, to over-awe the garrison of Bergues and the camp of Mount Cassel. On the 24th, his royal highness attacked the French, and drove them, with considerable slaughter, into the town. But the siege, which began with these prosperous symptoms, soon wore a very different appearance. The arrival of the heavy artillery was too long delayed; and the naval force, which was to have co-operated with the army, did not sail in time to perform any essential service. During these tardy operations, in which two weeks were consumed, the French government had put in requisition every species of vehicle, and collected from all the garrisons in the north, such an enormous mass of soldiery, that the covering army of Freytag was attacked; and, after successive repulses of the enemy, was at last over-powered by superior numbers. In this retreat, his royal highness Prince Adolphus and the Field-marshal Freytag were for a short time in the possession of the enemy. From this situation they were relieved by General Walinoden, who immediately attacked the village of Rexpode, in which his royal highness was prisoner, and over-powered the enemy with great slaughter. The duke of York now

Sept. 6.

found himself obliged to raise the siege. The military chest was saved ; but the heavy artillery, and a large quantity of ammunition, were necessarily abandoned.

CHAP.
XXVII.
1793.

Thus ended the fatal attempt upon Dunkirk. But though victory had deserted the British standard, she seemed faithful, for a time, to that of Austria. Quesnoy was taken by the allies, and the garrison made prisoners of war. The French were defeated at Billers-en-coucheé ; and the prince de Cobourg, having passed the Sambre, drove all the detached bodies of the enemy into the intrenched camp of Maubeuge, and invested both the camp and the fortress ; while Cambray and Bouchain were successively menaced by Marshal Clairfait.

The French army of the Rhine experienced a still greater disaster ; and the duke of Brunswick, by a skilful campaign, redeemed the memory of the former losses which had been so fatal to his reputation. An Austrian army, under General Wurmser, acted in concert with him. The French opposed to 80,000 of those warlike and fine troops of the allies, an army about the same size ; but fortified by the lines of Wissemburg, and Lauterburg, so famous for being the scene of war in the preceding century. Landau was invested by Wurmser ; and, on the 13th of October, those formidable lines were attacked by the allies, in six columns. They carried all the redoubts, in front of the French camps, by assault, and seized twenty-nine pieces of artillery ; had not a fog unfortunately risen, the greater part of the French must have been taken, or cut to pieces.

The tide of success thus continued to ebb and flow on both sides of the belligerents. But important and political causes finally fixed the fortune of our enemies, and put the numbers and efforts of their armies beyond the reach of competi-

CHAP.
XAVII.

1793.

tion. Of the five tyrants, who, as masters of the committee of public safety, governed the convention and all France, Robespierre, Billaud Varennes, Collot D'Herbois, St. Just, and Couthon, not one had military knowledge, or the genius to acquire it. Their conscious ignorance on the subject, however, saved them from the faults of presumption: they divided their power, reserving to themselves only the superintendence of massacres; and confided all the military part to Carnot, whose science in the art of war Europe has too severely felt. They appointed him their colleague, in the committee of public safety, though he was not their similar in guilt; they respected his talents, for their own sakes, and wished to second his efforts, by all the resources which their unbounded tyranny could so well afford to lavish at his feet. Far from being distressed, like other war-ministers, by scanty supplies, Carnot was only embarrassed by their profusion. The constituent assembly had made France a military people; for, in the first enthusiasm of liberty, every man had declared his willingness to carry arms as a soldier. The committee of public safety soon taught the French, that this engagement, contracted in levity, must be fulfilled. We have seen the levy of 300,000 men announced — the declaration of the war; that levy was, in the course of the present year, increased to 1,000,000; and the requisition was made from the flower of the French youth, from eighteen to twenty-five years of age.

Incredible as it may seem, the horrible law against the suspected facilitated the execution of this levy-in-mass. The youth of those families who were exposed to suspicion saw no other means of saving their parents, than by repairing to the republican banners. While they fought and bled at the frontiers, they had, at least, the consolation to be-

lieve, that their sufferings had saved those, who were most dear to them, from destruction; and they cherished this hope, at a moment when perhaps those relations were conducted to the scaffold. But illusions of hope, as well as of fear, become motives to submission; they were promised a prompt return, and an easy victory; and, for a while, were permitted to be commanded by officers of their own election; but, on coming to the frontiers, those officers were deprived of their ranks, and their battalions indiscriminately mingled with the troops of the line.

For the support of those enormous numbers, the revolutionary government sent forth their three scourges over the country; the requisition, the law of maximum, and the guillotine. The country was laid bare by their ravages; but it durst not complain. At this period, it was remarkable that the very terror which drove the people to conceal the remains of their wealth, became a source of credit and aggrandisement to the government. Men were afraid to circulate gold, lest it should betray their riches, every one buried his coin; and the assignats, which were showered out in billions, were, for several months, on a par with hard money.

The committee of public safety sent commissioners of the convention along with the armies, who had the powers of life and death, of displacing and provisionally appointing the generals, and who, in short, carried the firman of the French divan in their authority. Many of them were unprofitable agents, who only devoted men of genius to the scaffold; while others had the merit to distinguish and promote those commanders who never flattered them, and who even sometimes defied them. The genius of Carnot was such, that, with all the faults of the commissaries, they seemed

CHAP.
XXVII.

1793.

still to be his servants; and did not thwart the vast plans of the campaign which he had chalked out. A revolution was accomplished in the whole art of war. The German tactics had employed men as machines; the French tactics turned to advantage even the temerity of undisciplined men; and rendered their infantry the most formidable in Europe. For a long time, even during the whole course of the war, the Austrian cavalry preserved its superiority; but experience has shewn, that cavalry are, by far, the least important part of an army. The French artillery was rendered invincible, by the genius of its engineers, that body of distinguished men, who seemed alone to be spared for their country in the universal proscription of merit.

Such was the mighty system of war which France had now organized, by which she gained all her victories in the campaign of 1793, and retrieved the losses which she sustained by the triumphs of Brunswick towards the conclusion of the year.

After forcing the lines of Lauterburg and Wissemburg, the allies committed several faults: by which they forfeited the fruits of these victories. They advanced too impetuously to Strasburg, with small divisions of their army, which were successively beat. As the winter approached, they seemed fatigued, and relaxed in their operations: they blockaded Landau, and made themselves masters of fort Vauban; after which, it was scarcely doubted that Landau, through scarcity of provisions, would be obliged to yield to the numerous forces of the king of Prussia. But the French armies of the Rhine and Moselle were powerfully reinforced. Two generals, lately sprung from the ranks, seemed to be given for the preservation of their country; these were Hoche and Moreau. The promotion of both had

been equally sudden. The first owed his fortune to that impetuous and electric promptitude, which so well conformed to the genius of French soldiers. The other had already reduced the new system of tactics to scientific calculations, which decided the fate of the next campaign. It was in the midst of winter that the French renewed their offensive operations. The duke of Brunswick was totally defeated at Griesberg. Hoche pursued them with his usual activity, and cut them off from their intended project of forming a junction with the Austrians, who continued, under Wurmser, guarding their late conquests on the lines of Lauter and Weissim. Once more those important posts became a scene of conflict; the French attacked them, to retrieve all the honour and advantage they had there lost. Dessaix, who commanded the advanced guard of Pichegru, was the first who entered them. The Prussians were then totally routed out of Alsace; and the French triumphant-ly entered the Palatinate.

During these events, Jourdain, finding himself at liberty to assume offensive operations, sent detachments into maritime Flanders, who took possession of Werwick and Menin, advanced to Tournes and Nieuport, and even threatened Ostend. The arrival of Sir Charles Grey at this last place, with a considerable armament, which had been destined for the West Indies, for the present campaign contributed to save the Netherlands.

On her own element, Britain began the war with signal success. In the West Indies, the island of Tobago was captured by a British squadron under Admiral Laforey, about the beginning of April. For three years past, the French West-India islands, and particularly St. Domingo, had suffered all the scourge of revolutionary horrors, operating in retaliated barbarities between a race of slaves and

1793.

XIV.

1793.

of tyrants. The whole landholders, though divided among themselves, were in general attached to the cause of monarchy, and their principal difference of opinion was, whether the island should be ceded to Britain or to Spain, as a refuge from the insurrections of the blacks and people of colour. The appearance of a small British squadron from Jamaica, with a few troops on board, occasioned a partial determination in favour of Britain. Commodore Ford, who commanded our armament, having landed at Fort Jeremie, the inhabitants received him as their deliverer, and hoisted the English colours on their fort. Sailing from thence to Cape Nicholas, Mole and Grand Anse, the British were received with equal favour, and a coast of fifty leagues in extent submitted to their protection, though the interior of the island still remained a dreadful scene of disorder and devastation. The small islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon, on the coast of Newfoundland, surrendered to a small invading force, under General Ogilvie. An attempt which we made on Martinique did not meet with the same success, our troops being obliged to re-embark, after having landed. On the East Indies, the fortifications of Chandernagore, Carical, Tanam, and Pondicherry, surrendered to the British arms.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

